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RAMBLES IN CEYLON.

RAMBLES IN CEYLON,

BY

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LIEUT. DE BUTTS.

61st Regt.
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" Wherein of antres vast, and DESERTS IDLE,
Rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads touch heaven,
It was my hint to speak."

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LONDON:

WM. H. ALLEN AND CO.,

7, LEADENHALL STREET.

1841.

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Printed by J. L. Cox and Sons, 75, Great Queen Street,
Lincoln's Inn Fields.

PREFACE.

FROM Delhi to Cape Comorin, from the banks of the Indus to those of the Brahmaputra, every part of our vast Indian territories has furnished an unfailing theme for descriptive writers; yet, strange to say, the beautiful and romantic Island of Ceylon, although almost touching, and, "if ancient tales say true," formerly forming a continuation of, the peninsula of Hindustan, has hitherto remained enveloped in comparative obscurity. It is true, indeed, that histories of the island are not wanting; but lighter works, giving those minute details of scenes and impressions which, though interesting to

the general reader, are infinitely beneath the dignity of history, are nowhere to be found. It is after reflecting upon this *hiatus* in light Oriental literature, that the author has ventured to submit the following "Rambles in Ceylon" to the reader, in the hope that they may in some measure tend to obviate the unmerited indifference generally entertained towards that interesting and important colony.

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RAMBLES IN CEYLON.

CHAPTER I.

Ancient name of Ceylon—Its former obscurity—Causes of this—Conquest of the Dutch Possessions by the British, and subsequent submission of the whole Island—First view of the Ceylon Coast—Its picturesque aspect—Canoes of Ceylon—Arrival at Colombo—Description of the Fort of Colombo.

CEYLON was, in the olden time, known by the name of Serendib. In the enchanting "Arabian Nights," frequent mention is made of the island, as the theatre of many of the gorgeous scenes that are so splendidly depicted in those eastern tales. Serendib has ever been a *terra incognita*, and, therefore, a land of story and romance.

More than three hundred years have

elapsed since the Portuguese first visited Ceylon, and their subsequent settlement on its western shores; but neither the enterprising colonists of that nation, nor their successors, the Dutch, ever succeeded in their various attempts to establish a permanent station within the country occupied by the savage and independent aborigines, whose territories comprised the whole of that elevated region in the interior now denominated the Kandian province, together with the flat country extending northward to Anurajahpoora, the ancient capital of the Kandian dynasty. The European colonists were only able to retain possession of the coast, and of a belt of land encircling the island, varying from twenty to thirty miles in breadth. This, after many severe contests with the natives, was secured to the Dutch by treaties, which were, however, violated whenever the interests of either of the contending parties prompted them so to do. These constant feuds had the effect of keeping up a spirit of

hostility, and the Dutch were regarded with such suspicion and enmity, as to render it dangerous for them to traverse the interior of the island with a view of discovering the resources of the country, and dispelling the mist of obscurity in which, from time immemorial, the inland provinces had been enveloped. Other causes co-operated to prevent the European invaders from obtaining much insight into the character and resources of the island. The early colonists were, generally speaking, rapacious and illiterate; adventurers, whose chief aim was immediate gain, wherewith to quit an unhealthy and inhospitable shore. Such men were little likely to encounter imminent risk amidst inimical savages and pestilential swamps, in an attempt to throw light on a subject that had hitherto baffled inquiry. Thus the chief, if not the only, knowledge of the interior of Ceylon was derived from the hasty notes of military officers, during the occasional incursions made by the Dutch into the Kandian

territory. These, however, were few and scanty, and chiefly dwelt on the physical sufferings of the troops in their painful marches through the deadly jungles which overspread the island. Harassed by a vigilant enemy, and oppressed by the climate and the want of supplies, the writers seem to have had little leisure, and still less inclination, to observe the character and natural advantages of the country through which they advanced.

On the surrender of the Dutch possessions to the British, in 1796, this state of topographical ignorance still continued to exist for several years. The fame of British conquest on the Indian main had penetrated even into the recesses of the Kandian jungles, and, although they rejoiced at the unceremonious expulsion of their ancient enemies, the dwellers therein could not but feel alarmed at the near approach of a power, compared to which the Dutch were utterly insignificant. In the hope of overpowering

the British, before their hold of the country was yet strengthened by time, and their troops inured to the climate, the Kandian monarch prepared to open hostilities against them. The war thus forced on the British was waged with various success, and terminated without any cession on either side; but the numerous casualties caused by the insalubrious climate would probably have deterred the new invaders from a second attempt to penetrate into the interior with a military force. Fortune, however, befriended them; and the kingdom that had retained its independence against the repeated efforts of three European powers, finally succumbed to the influence of internal dissension.

The Kandian government was a pure despotism, and the sovereigns who successively ruled were generally unsparing in the exercise of their unbounded prerogative, and cruel in the execution of their judicial sentences. Cruelty and dissimulation appear

to have ever been the prominent characteristics of the Kandian people, who were accustomed to witness with indifference the most horrid tortures inflicted with the sanction of law. But the ferocity of Srēē Wikremē Rajah Singha, who was the reigning monarch in 1815, so far surpassed that of his most tyrannical predecessors, as to cause general disaffection and secret cabals for the purpose of deposing him. The chief adigar (a title which would seem to correspond with that of viceroy) took advantage of the rising discontent to declare against his sovereign, and, conscious of his own weakness, called upon the British for support and the aid of a military force. Such a favourable conjuncture was eagerly seized upon, and a strong detachment accordingly advanced to the assistance of the rebellious vassal, which, with little difficulty, secured the capital, and the person of the king. This eastern Caligula was forthwith despatched to the fortress of Vellore, on the

Indian continent, where he remained "in durance vile" during the rest of his life.

A secure footing in the centre of the island having been thus established, every precaution that could tend to secure its permanence was adopted. Nor did they prove unnecessary; for the Kandians, when their civil animosities began to subside, discovered the fatal error they had committed by invoking the aid of interested auxiliaries. Before the British power in the interior had existed for two years, the native chieftains put their hostile designs into execution, and roused their countrymen to arms. But the peaceable occupation of the capital and surrounding country, even for the brief period of two years, gave the new rulers over the Kandian territory advantages that had never been enjoyed by the Dutch or Portuguese. To this circumstance must in some measure be attributed the complete success that attended the British operations in the war that now raged throughout the island, the

inmost recesses of which were everywhere penetrated by the victorious European troops.

The rebellion, or, to speak more correctly, the war of independence, was at length universally quelled, and the hostile feelings of the natives, which gave rise to it, gradually subsided.

Since the termination of this outbreak, no insurrection of importance has taken place, and there is now no part of India where the population is more pacifically inclined than that of Ceylon. Thus, from the most persevering and indomitable foes that Europeans have encountered in the East, the natives of the Kandian country have become the most tranquil and contented subjects that Britain controls in her Oriental possessions.

Having thus briefly glanced at the history of Ceylon, or rather of the kingdom, that, until lately, existed in the heart of the island, and occupied its fairest provinces, the reader will probably feel the more interested in con-

templating the present position and prospects of this thriving colony, which the writer, whose professional duties led him to reside in Ceylon from 1836 until the close of the past year, will endeavour to sketch in the course of the following papers. During his stay, he visited the principal places in the island, and as detailed accounts of them are not to be found in any work on British India, a general description of them will not, it is presumed, be considered superfluous or uninteresting. Dispensing, therefore, with the somewhat threadbare subject of a voyage to India by the Cape route, the numerous accounts of which have nearly palled the public appetite, he will at once plunge *in medias res*, and commence with his first view of the shores of Ceylon.

Ships from Europe bound for Ceylon usually make the land in the vicinity of Dondra Head, the most southern point of the island, where the inland country is hilly and the coast particularly bold. Nothing regarding

India is, perhaps, more generally known in Europe than the tameness and uniformity that characterize the long line of the coast of Hindustan; but the southern, and more particularly the south-eastern coast of Ceylon is the converse of this. Instead of a low sandy shore, fringed with coco-nut trees and palmyras, "few and far between," which our previously-conceived ideas of eastern scenery had led us to anticipate, we beheld thickly-wooded hills, rising abruptly from the water's edge, and a country clad in an universal green, only varied by the occasional appearance of some bold and naked rock, while far in the distance loomed Adam's Peak, towering over the comparatively low mountains that surround it.

The whole of the southern coast of Ceylon, when viewed from the sea, is highly picturesque and romantic. Nature appears to have delighted in forming this part of the island into a seeming chaos of hill and dale. The rocky summits of the mountains are

thrown into the most fantastic shapes. Impregnable castles, with innumerable turrets, bartizans, and "coignes of vantage," appear to frown defiance. As the spectator sails along the coast, these rocky combinations fade away, and are replaced by others equally curious and striking.

In the interior of India, there are doubtless many scenes of nature rivalling, or, perhaps, surpassing the magnificence of the most romantic provinces of Ceylon; but the bold and wild coast of the island stands unrivalled by any part of the Indian peninsula. This description of the Ceylon coast must, however, be understood only to apply to that portion of it most remote from the Indian continent. As the adjacent shores approach, they seem also to approximate in their general features and aspect, until, in the vicinity of Jaffna, on the northern coast, the distinction is reduced to nothing more than the greater appearance of wood on the island than on the main land.

With the view of benefiting by the land-wind, that usually prevails at night even when the most perfect calms are experienced during the day, we kept close to the western shore of the island, which we were thus enabled closely to reconnoitre. At the close of day, a ripple on the face of the placid deep announced the coming of the hoped-for breeze. A few hours' sailing with this constant yet light zephyr brought us within sight of the Colombo light-house.

When day broke, we found ourselves within a few miles of the fort of Colombo, and in the midst of a fleet of Ceylon canoes, which are of a very peculiar construction, not met with elsewhere in India. By means of a floating log of wood, termed an outrigger, and attached to the canoes by slightly arched spars of ten or twelve feet in length, which project at right angles from the gunwales of the boats, the frail vessels are prevented from capsizing; and so safe are they thus rendered, that they live in a heavy sea,

and rarely meet with any serious accident. They carry one large sail, which, even with the lightest breath of air, propels the slight skiff over the water at a surprising rate. These craft came off in great numbers to the ship with fruit, fish, and bread. The pine-apples, which were sold for a fanam (1½d.), were eagerly purchased by the new-comers from England, to whom the price demanded seemed marvellous. With the exception of the delicious pine-apple, there are few fruits in the island worthy of mention. The land of the East is generally associated with a profusion of fruit, but those who arrive with such an impression are invariably disappointed. Thanks to the eternal summer of Ceylon, the best fruits, the pine-apple, the plaintain, the pummelow, or shadock, as it is called in the West-Indies, are always procurable; but whether on account of their abundance and consequent familiarity, or of their generally indifferent flavour, they are little relished by Euro-

pean residents, and frequently leave the table untouched.

Before noon, on the 7th of March, 1836, we came to anchor in the roads of Colombo. The roadstead is much exposed to the violence of the south-west monsoon, but from October to March, inclusive, the sea on the western shores of Ceylon is "unrippled as glass may be." Large ships usually anchor nearly a mile from the land; but there is sufficient water for the coasting craft immediately under the guns of the fort, which stands on a projecting tongue of land, and has a fine appearance when viewed from the sea. No time was lost in effecting a landing. None, save those who have doubled the Cape, can appreciate the luxury of treading on *terra firma*, after a four months' imprisonment on board ship. On such an occasion, the most phlegmatic share in the general excitement, and cheerfulness usurps the place of the previous *ennui*, which, towards the close of a long voyage, usually reigns in all its terrors.

Here no surf rolls eternally, as at Madras and the adjacent coast, nor are "moving accidents by flood" chronicled as having often occurred in the harbour of Colombo. Without any adventure, we accordingly made our way to the landing-place, and from thence to our respective abodes. Hospitality is said to be the virtue most cultivated in India, and it is certainly true that more attention is shewn to strangers in our Eastern possessions, than they would experience in their native land. Many causes combine to produce this effect. In India there are no inns, or places of public accommodation worthy of that name; the wayfarer is thus thrown on the commiseration of a sympathizing public, who feel bound not to allow the absence of "mine host." to be felt as an inconvenience by the traveller. The monotony of country stations in India is an additional inducement to the exercise of hospitality; the presence of a stranger is an excellent excuse for a "gathering" at

the house where he is located. The scandal of the Mofussil is exchanged for the gossip of the Carnatic, and the guest thus repays the attentions of his entertainer. In this respect, Colombo forms no exception to the customs of India. The party, of which I was an unit, speedily found themselves domiciled in the houses of sundry good Samaritans. A large proportion of the European residents at Colombo live without the walls of the fort, in which the temperature is much higher than in the less confined suburbs that extend on either side of the works along the sea-shore. All public offices and the principal buildings are, however, within the fort, which is, therefore, the great resort "where merchants most do congregate." The streets, as in the generality of military works, run at right angles with each other, and are sufficiently wide and well ventilated. A great portion of the space within the *enceinte* of the fort is occupied by the residence of the governor, or, as it is

usually termed, "the Queen's House." This building is long and straggling, but redeems the general character of the surrounding houses, which are, for the most part, insignificant in appearance, and at once destroy the illusive anticipations of Oriental luxury that a griffin is apt to cherish.

The fortress of Colombo owes its strength rather to nature than art. It is an irregular octagon, having five of its fronts washed by the sea, and the remainder towards the land covered by an extensive sheet of water, generally denominated the Colombo Lake, to which lofty appellation it is, however, scarcely entitled. Thus the works are nearly insulated, and can be approached by a besieging force only at the points where the narrow strips of ground, that intervene between the sea and the lake, connect the fort with the adjacent country. The Portuguese commenced, and the Dutch completed and improved, the fortification, which is *per se* highly respectable; but, as

before observed, its chief strength consists in the deep and broad watery barrier with which nature has encircled the whole of the *enceinte.* In short, the fort of Colombo is infinitely superior to any other military work in Ceylon, and in India is second only to Fort William at Calcutta. Like that celebrated fortification, it glories no longer in the honourable appellation of a virgin fortress, the Dutch having yielded it on the first summons of the British, in 1796.

CHAPTER II.

Effects of heat on Griffins—Attacks of musquitoes—Prefer new-comers—Such preference, though flattering, not in this case agreeable—Merits of coffee in the cool of the morning—Aurora *versus* Hesperus—Critique on the Portuguese in Ceylon—Ditto on the Dutch residents—Horse-racing in the East—Voyage to Trincomalee—Temple of Ramiseram—Arrival at Trincomalee.

To a new-comer from Europe, the burning heat of the noon-tide sun in India is perhaps less oppressive than to old residents in tropical climes. It has more effect on his constitution, and exposure to the sun is more likely to injure the health of the recruit than that of the veteran. But the actual sense of lassitude and exhaustion is far more sensibly felt by those who have long resided in debilitating climates than by men who, fresh from their native land, bring

greater physical powers to contend with the eternal heat. Like Antæus in his combat with Hercules, the European derives from his mother earth a supply of strength, which requires an occasional renewal to compensate for the constant drain of a perennial summer.

But whatever may be the comparative daily sufferings of Europeans long resident in India, and of those recently arrived, there can be no question as to the greater misery of the new-comers during the still and sultry nights of the tropics. A fresh importation from England is a god-send to the villainous musquitoes, whose annoyance is one of the greatest of the minor ills of life in warm latitudes. The bite of a musquito is not painful, and might be borne without repining by any person blessed with a tolerable stock of Christian resignation, were it not that the buzzing of the insect, previous to its attack, induces a feverish restlessness, that most effectually murders sleep. If the reader

calls to mind the unpleasant feeling which the near approach of a wasp creates, he will easily imagine the nervous anxiety that is experienced by a griffin* when he is first aroused by the buzzing salutations of the musquito. The first few nights in the East are, in this manner, rendered so wretched, that the sufferer, on rising at day-break, feels half-inclined to exclaim with Clarence:

"I would not pass another such a night
Though 'twere to buy a world of happy days."

It has long been, and long may it continue to be, customary in Ceylon to take a cup of coffee in the morning, as a preliminary to dressing. After a sleepless night, coffee is a delightful restorative. As you quaff the delicious beverage, all reminiscences of your nightly miseries, the musquitoes, fade away, and, as if you had partaken of the waters of Lethe, you rise like a giant refreshed, and sally forth to enjoy the cool-

* A term applied to all Europeans lately arrived in India.

ness of the morning air ere the rays of the sun become oppressive. The hour after the dawn of day, above all others, is the most delightful in the Eastern world. The ground is cooled by the long absence of the sun's rays from its surface, and the temperature of the air until seven o'clock is sufficiently agreeable and exhilarating. All the world take advantage of this short interval of time, and are to be seen at the favourite lounge of the station. The twilight may be preferred in more temperate regions, but in the tropics the dawn is more salubrious and refreshing. Hesperus may be invoked in Europe, but in Asia the votaries of Aurora will ever predominate.

There are several rides in the vicinity of Colombo, of which the most fashionable and agreeable are those through the cinnamon gardens. The term "garden" is, in this case, a misnomer, for there is nothing in the mode of planting and arranging the cinnamon trees to realize the ideas conveyed by the word;

the cinnamon shrub is, on the contrary, of an unprepossessing appearance. The plantations of this valuable spice in the vicinity of Colombo are very extensive, and more valuable than any others in the island. The trees are not allowed to exceed the height of eight or nine feet, as, after attaining a greater altitude, they degenerate in value. The popular phrase of "the spicy groves of Araby the blest" is, as far as Ceylon is concerned, a poetic illusion. The strong and delicious scent arising from the cinnamon tree exists only in Oriental fable; little or no smell is perceptible, except during the cutting season, when a slight odour is emitted from the lately-cut branches; but as this is only to be detected by one in their immediate vicinity, the tale concerning the spicy breezes that are inhaled off the coast of Ceylon, which has appeared in some works generally deserving of credit, savours somewhat of the marvellous.

The Pettah, or Black Town, of Colombo,

is densely populated by natives, in whose features may be observed every possible variety between those of the fair European and the sable negro. This variety of colour and countenance only exists in the neighbourhood of large European stations, where the Dutch, and more particularly the Portuguese, have intermarried with the natives. The descendants of the Portuguese colonists are, almost without exception, degenerate in the extreme. Not the remotest trace of the spirit and enterprise that led their forefathers, the bold navigators of the sixteenth century, to these distant shores, is observable in their posterity now resident in Ceylon. To this general observation there are, of course, honourable exceptions; but the moral and physical degeneracy of the Indo-Portuguese is, nevertheless, proverbial.

The Dutch, who are still numerous in the scene of their former conquest, afford a striking contrast to the fallen Lusitanians, with whom they rarely, if ever, associate.

In their deportment towards that unhappy race, they seem to have imbibed from the Spaniards the idea of immeasurable superiority which is expressed in *Childe Harold:*

"Full well the Spanish hind the difference doth know
'Twixt him and Lusian slave, the lowest of the low."

In no respect are they changed. Honest and industrious, they obtain universal respect. This wide dissimilarity may in some measure be attributed to the cold and phlegmatic character of their nation, which recoils from that familiarity and intercourse with the natives which have proved so injurious to the Portuguese. The Dutch have ever been severe and despotic in the government of their colonies. To rule by the influence of fear appears to have been the sole aim and principal maxim of their colonial policy. Their predecessors in Ceylon, the Portuguese, adopted a less stern mode of government, and admitted the natives of rank into their armies and colonial legislatures. They were repaid by treachery, which deprived them of

the flower of their troops, and eventually of the island. Warned by their fate, their conquerors went into the opposite extreme, and their tyranny rivalled that of the Spaniards towards the unhappy aborigines of the New World. To steer between these political rocks, upon which the Portuguese and Dutch have respectively struck, has been the study of the British Government, and it may safely be affirmed that this policy is already reaping its deserved reward, in the affections and respect of the Cingalese.

The suburbs or Pettah of Colombo extend three or four miles from the fort, and are inhabited by at least fifty thousand people. The surrounding country is generally flat, but the landscape, although possessing none of the wild grandeur that characterizes the interior provinces, is redeemed from insipidity by the pleasing appearance of the lake, which, though of insignificant breadth, is of considerable length. A few pleasure-

boats, skimming over its surface, add to the animation of the scene, and afford the means of enjoying aquatic excursions, which, above all others, are the most delightful recreation in the tropics.

In Ceylon scenery, the absence of water frequently detracts from the beauty of the landscape, which, being usually clad with the foliage of the tropics, requires some relief to its uniformity. There are not, as in more populous lands, any villages, rustic farms, or cultivated fields, which animate, and, as it were, clothe the face of nature. In the wild and unpeopled regions of the island, the eye of the tourist feasts only on the glories of nature, unaided by the works of art and the labours of man. Although the contemplation of the vast, silent, and impervious forests, that cover the greater portion of Ceylon, never fails to interest the lover of scenery, he yet feels that the presence of a *brawling* mountain torrent or of an expanse of water is necessary to perfect the most

romantic prospect that can be afforded by a savage country.

The favourite promenade of the colonists is a strip of ground, called the Galle Face, and forming part of the glacis of the fort. It is inclosed between the sea and the lake, to which favourable circumstance of locality is owing the preference shewn it, and it extends nearly a mile along the sea-shore. Being tolerably level, the Galle Face has been selected as a race-course. Racing in the East is generally prolonged for several days, as the interval of the brief tropical twilights necessarily limits the number of races during an evening to two, or at most three. This national amusement is kept up at several of the principal stations in India, and although Anglo-Indian races are not to be compared with those of England in most points, they yet have some peculiar merits. The riders, without exception, are gentlemen; and a spirit of fairness, and the absence of all trickery, are the natural consequences.

Colombo is the head-quarter station of two British infantry regiments. The other European corps in the island are quartered at Kandy, and in Fort Frederick, at Trincomalee. The regiment to which I belonged being stationed at the latter place at the period of my arrival, my stay at Colombo on first landing was limited to a few days; and before the zest of novelty had worn off, I was again on the deep, *en route* for Trincomalee. The name of this station is, perhaps, more familiar to European ears than any other place in Ceylon. Its splendid harbour has obtained for Trincomalee a celebrity to which it can lay but few other claims, for it is not a favourite quarter on account of its acknowledged insalubrity, and of its isolation from the rest of the island, with which the chief communication is carried on by sea. There are, indeed, roads leading to both Jaffna and Kandy, but these afford so few conveniences to the traveller, and that to the latter place is so unhealthy, that, except

in urgent cases, the circuitous and tedious voyage by sea is chosen in preference to the direct but insalubrious route by land.

The small coasting vessels that constantly ply between Colombo and Trincomalee are, by reason of their trifling draught of water, enabled to choose between the voyage by way of Point Pedro and that by Dondra Head, the extreme northern and southern points of the island. Their choice is regulated by the monsoons, which alternately prevail from the north-east and south-west. The former commences about October, and continues until the end of March or the beginning of April. With the exception of a short interval of calms at the equinoxes, the south-west monsoon blows steadily, and frequently with great violence, during the remainder of the year.

As, at the period of my departure from Colombo, the monsoon was from the north-east, the route by way of Point Pedro, which leads through the intricate and shallow pas-

sage of the Paumban, was preferred. In the vicinity of Paumban the navigation is impeded by a ledge of rocks, which, running nearly due east, extends across the narrow sea between the island and the Indian main. In March, 1836, there were barely five feet of water over the rocky barrier. The country craft were accordingly compelled to unload their cargoes until their draught was sufficiently reduced to allow of their navigating the passage. The Madras Government, in concert with that of Ceylon, have since that period undertaken to remove this great natural obstacle to the coast navigation.

The uncertain winds and calms, which prevail during the few weeks that intervene between the expiration and commencement of the alternate monsoons, render the voyage from Colombo to Trincomalee at those periods of the year tedious and of long continuance. These seasons of calms occur in April and September, which are, consequently, the most oppressive months in the year. Whilst

the slightest breath of air is felt, a very high temperature is endurable; but when the breeze dies away, the same atmosphere becomes intolerable. The thermometer indicates the actual intensity of heat, but is no test of the degree in which that heat affects the sensations of those exposed to its influence. This truth is fully appreciated by every dweller in the tropics, who has experienced the oppressive feelings produced by the constant lulls that take place, when the violence of the one monsoon is expended, and is not yet succeeded by that of the other.

The tedium of a voyage performed under such circumstances was broken by occasional glimpses of the Coromandel coast, and of the numerous and wooded islets that are thickly scattered in the narrow strait which separates Ceylon from the Indian continent. That part of the coast of Hindustan immediately opposite Ceylon is extremely monotonous and tame. A long line of sand, with here

and there a low prickly shrub (mimosa) are all that meet the eye, upon which this first view of the Indian main-land makes any thing but a favourable impression. In this vicinity, the only object of interest to the traveller is the celebrated temple of Ramiseram, which, like the tomb of Mahomet, attracts pilgrims to its shrines from far distant shores. It stands on a small oblong island, which bears its name, and is about seven miles in length, and nearly half as broad. The natives have a tradition, that the isle of Ramiseram was in other days connected by land with both Hindustan and Ceylon. The rocky ledge extending across the interval of sea between Manar and Ramnad, at the points where the shores of the island and of the continent most nearly approach each other, is, in the opinion of the wise men of the East, the remaining vestige of this ancient isthmus. This opinion is strengthened by the frequent occurrence of islands and sandbanks on the line of the sup-

posed communication; but however this may be with regard to Ceylon, the former connection of the isle of Ramiseram with the Indian continent is generally admitted. The intervening expanse of sea is not considerable, and its entire width is occupied by a well-defined line of rocks, by means of which the natives are enabled to punt their canoes and fishing-boats from the main land to the island. On either side of this chain of rocks, and at immediately opposite points, roads paved with large flat stones approach the edge of the water, and seem to indicate that the space now covered by the sea was formerly traversed by this artificial work, which must have required considerable labour and time in its construction. Such, at least, is the belief of the natives, who further assert, that the object of this ground communication was to facilitate the annual transit of the car of Juggernaut from the temples of Ramiseram to those of Madura, a place in southern India.

The principal landing-place is at a point of the island, distant nearly six miles from the temple. As you ride along on one of the numerous ponies or tatties provided for the use of the pilgrims, you see on every side innumerable minor temples and sacred tanks, which, for the most part, are in a good state of preservation, and in many instances worthy of notice. Every object seems to announce that the spot whereon you stand is holy ground: the road constructed for religious purposes—the troops of pilgrims who, on foot and on horseback, wend their way to the far-famed temple—the numerous edifices consecrated to religion—and, above all, the multitude of priests in their flowing white robes, and with the emblems of their high caste and sacred calling marked on their foreheads, impress the most frivolous mind with feelings of veneration, and cause the proud European to look with more respect than is his wont on the way-worn victims of superstition that surround him. This feeling

is further increased by the first view of the temple, as in solemn grandeur its ponderous and ornamented front appears towering above the petty village at its base. The sacred building is inclosed by a lofty wall, which bars all egress or ingress save by two grand entrances on the eastern and western sides. Vastness, that necessary adjunct to magnificence, is not wanting here. The external aspect of the immense pile does not belie its high reputation, or disappoint the anticipations of the traveller; but although the exterior of the temple, particularly on the western side, has an imposing appearance, the curiosity of the visitor to behold its interior seldom allows him to linger long without its holy precincts.

After making a cursory survey of the outward appearance of the edifice, the party that accompanied the writer entered by the eastern gate. We found the interior space divided by long narrow passages, which, cutting each other at right angles, form

large squares and rectangles. These are occupied either by tanks of holy water or some small and isolated sacred building. The pilgrims descend into the tanks, which may be compared to so many pools of Bethesda, by means of broad flights of stone steps, that are constructed on every side of the squares, and give a noble effect to these baths. Numbers of devotees were performing their ablutions, which, after their toilsome journey over the sandy plains of the Carnatic, must have proved as beneficial to their bodies as to their souls. The Oriental mode of bathing, it may be observed *en passant*, differs materially from the custom of Europeans. Instead of plunging into the water, the native of the East is usually passive during the operation of bathing, which is performed for him by another individual, who repeatedly pours the contents of an earthen jar upon the head of the bather. In the absence of a *chatty*, as this globular earthen vessel so universal in India is

termed, the natives adopt a system of ducking themselves under water several times in rapid succession, until the body is sufficiently cooled and refreshed by repeated immersions. The loud splashing of water and the constant hum of conversation amongst the bathers of Ramiseram would disturb the devotions of men less engrossed by religious meditation than the pilgrims who constantly crowd the surrounding places of worship.

The minor temples, which fill up the intervening spaces between these sacred tanks, are generally uniform and simple in appearance. They are for the most part crowned by long tapering spires, which produce a pleasing and peculiar effect. The long galleries connecting these domes arrest the attention chiefly on account of the enormous slabs of stone employed in their construction, and the numerous gigantic images and statues that line their entire length. The statues are those of Vishnu, Siva, and of various other Hindu gods, who are repre-

sented either in a recumbent or standing attitude, but for the most part in the latter position.

To a critical eye, some of these figures would doubtless appear sufficiently grotesque. Byron's description of Newstead Abbey may give an idea of the *tout ensemble* of the interior appearance of the temple.

"Huge halls, long galleries, spacious chambers, joined
By no quite lawful marriage of the arts,
Might shock a connoisseur; but when combined,
Formed a whole, which, irregular in parts,
Yet left a grand impression on the mind
At least of those whose eyes are in their hearts."

A large portion of the interior space is cut off from the rest of the edifice. Into this sanctified place, the European unbeliever is not permitted to enter; but from within the sound of music constantly arises, and ever and anon the dark eyes of the vestal virgins, who form the choir, glance beneath the raised tapestry.

No entreaties or bribes could induce the flinty janitor who guarded the portals of this

terrestrial paradise to allow the foot of an infidel to pollute the apartments occupied by these dusky beauties. Nothing respecting this interesting part of the temple could be discovered by our party, who, though baffled in their attempt to reconnoitre the innermost penetralia of the sacred pile, were, nevertheless, highly gratified, and more than repaid for their arduous march over the sandy island under a burning sun.

This visit to Ramiseram relieved the monotony of our voyage to Trincomalee, which, in a miserable country craft, was uninteresting and tedious. After leaving the sacred site of Ramiseram, nothing is to be seen on the savage coast of Ceylon until you arrive at Jaffnapatam, the chief military post and civil agency in the north of the island. The coast in this vicinity has none of the bold features that characterize the southern shores of Ceylon, nor does the face of the inland country, which is flat and tame, redeem the unpleasing aspect of the

sandy and level coast. But, in the eyes of the political economist, Jaffna has more sterling merits than those that belong to scenery. Art has here atoned for the absence of the beauties of nature, and the smiling fields, fertile lands, and excellent roads, that everywhere meet the eye, indemnify the spectator for the absence of those wild and uncultivated scenes, which are by far too common in a land as yet but partially reclaimed by the hand of man.

In its high cultivation and fertile plains, this place rather partakes of the characteristics of the neighbouring continent than of those of the island within the limits of which it is comprised. It is chiefly peopled by emigrants from Hindustan, as are many of the villages on the northern coast of Ceylon. Many Dutch families of respectability, attracted by the salubrity of the climate and the fertility of the soil, have selected the vicinity of Jaffna as a residence, to which circumstance may, in a great degree, be

attributed the superior industry and intelligence that mark the inhabitants of the town and neighbouring country. The English society is confined to two or three officers of the small garrison, and a few gentlemen of the civil service. The military occupy a fort, built by the Dutch, and in a good state of repair. Like the town in general, the works are kept in order with a most fastidious attention to neatness of appearance. In this respect the fort deserves praise; but as a military work, it is unworthy of notice.

After weathering Point Pedro, the most northern extremity of the island, the north-east monsoon, which had hitherto been adverse, speedily wafted us to our destination. The coast between Jaffna and Trincomalee is nearly uninhabited, and covered with dense jungle, which, however, is occasionally diversified by wide and beautiful plains, where the wild pig, the deer, and the buffalo are to be met with in vast herds. Of these plains, that of Cutchivelly, from its vicinity

to Trincomalee, is much frequented by the sportsmen of that station, who, ever and anon, commit fearful havoc amongst the wild and savage denizens of the surrounding woods.

These openings in the pathless forest are rarely visible from the sea. A long line of cocoa-nut trees fringes the edge of the jungle, and conceals the inland country. The high rocky promontory on which the fort of Trincomalee, or, as it is usually termed, Fort Frederick, stands, agreeably relieves the uniformity of this part of the coast. The flag-staff being on the highest point of the elevated ground, inclosed within the walls of the fort, is visible from the sea at a considerable distance. Immediately under, and commanded by, the guns of the fortress, is an anchorage for small craft, which, however, is exposed to the north-east, and only frequented during the prevalence of the south-west monsoon. The small bay containing this anchorage is partly formed by

the projecting peninsula inclosed within the works of Fort Frederick, which, towards the sea, is rendered impregnable by the perpendicular and lofty rocks that skirt the whole of that portion of the *enceinte* which is washed by the waters of the bay. The frowning heights, crowned with redoubts, and bristling with artillery, impress the spectator with an idea of their military strength, if not of impregnability; which, however, a closer inspection speedily and completely removes.

CHAPTER III.

Insalubrity of Trincomalee—Elephant shooting—Occasional accidents at that amusement—Such accidents any thing but amusing—Narrow escape from an elephant—Rogue elephants—Tusked elephants, *alias* Tuskers.—Elephant kraals—Fortifications of Trincomalee—Candelay Lake—Hot Wells of Cannia.

THE houses in the fort of Trincomalee are exclusively occupied by the military. The officers' quarters are at the base of the high ground, already spoken of, and on that account more salubrious than the buildings that crown the heights. In India, the summits of hills are proverbially unhealthy, as they get the benefit of the malaria arising from the low country around them, which continues to envelope them long after the valleys are freed from its presence. This fact appears to have escaped the attention

of the authorities who sanctioned the building of barracks on the hilly ground within the walls of Fort Frederick. In consequence of this violation of all sanitary rules, Trincomalee has always formed an exception to the general salubrity of the military stations in Ceylon. When the writer resided there, the mortality among the European troops was little less than that of the West-Indies, which is usually estimated at twelve per cent. annually. Yet there were at that time few or no cases of cholera; a disease which appears more rarely in Ceylon than on the Indian continent. Fevers and dysentery, the maladies chiefly incidental to tropical climes, were the principal causes of the mortality. Neither the officers of the garrison, nor the civilians resident in the immediate vicinity of the fort, suffered in proportion. No casualty from sickness occurred amongst them. This medical enigma can only be solved by attributing superior salubrity to sites on level ground; for although

exposure to night air, and the want of the luxuries which are so indispensable in the East, usually cause a greater mortality among the European troops in India than among those of their countrymen moving in a higher sphere of society, the wide distinction observable at Trincomalee cannot be accounted for by these general causes.

Were it not that this station has obtained a character of extreme insalubrity, there are advantages belonging to the place that would render it a quarter rather popular than otherwise. To the lover of aquatic excursions, the noble harbour to which Trincomalee gives its name unites all the charms that the most fastidious could require. Within its broad expanse are many romantic islets, on one of which a bungalow has been built by the officers of the squadron in the East-Indies, of which Trincomalee is the head-quarter station. The bungalow is the favourite resort of the officers of the men-of-war lying in the harbour, and also of parties

of pleasure from the garrison and the station. A more delightful spot than the island on which the building stands could scarcely be found even in the romantic land of Ceylon. The house itself, and the garden attached to it, are in keeping with the character of the surrounding scenery. With the exception of the ground in the immediate vicinity of this sylvan villa, the island is unreclaimed from its state of nature, and teems with all the rich and luxuriant vegetation peculiar to the tropics. Through the tangled labyrinth of jungle, a narrow path has been opened to the summit of a lofty hill that crowns the isle, and is the highest ground in the neighbourhood of Trincomalee. With great difficulty, a heavy gun has been dragged to this point, whence a fine and very extensive view of the harbour and surrounding country may be obtained.

The circumference of the harbour may be about nine or ten miles, and when thus viewed from an elevated position, the large

and placid sheet of water, with its numerous indents—the wooded isles that seem to float on its surface—the men-of-war lying motionless at their anchorage—and the rich and tropical aspect of the forests that cover the whole of the inland country—form a landscape, in surveying which the eye never tires, and which must be seen to be appreciated.

The other islands that stud the surface of this liquid mirror are generally smaller than that already described, and being for the most part clad with dense and almost impervious jungle, are uninhabited, and rarely visited. Here and there on the surrounding shore may be seen a native hut, but these are few, and, being hidden by the trees around them, are hardly distinguishable from any distance. The general appearance of the country is, therefore, that of a wild and unpeopled land, and this adds much to the peculiar charm and fascination of the scene.

This station entirely owes its importance

to the harbour, for the country in the vicinity is extremely poor and unproductive; the population chiefly subsisting by fishing. But such a port as that of Trincomalee would redeem the character of the most valueless island; and in India, where no harbour worthy of the name is to be found between Bombay, on the western coast, and Calcutta, on the eastern, the value of a port centrically situated, as that of Trincomalee, is infinitely great. It has, indeed, been said that, at the close of the late war, Ceylon, as well as Java, would have been restored to its former possessors, the Dutch, had it not been for the paramount importance so justly attached to this harbour, which is equally secure against the violence of the wind, and, as far as natural defences can avail, the insults of an enemy.

The entrance is between two projecting head-lands, which approach within seven hundred yards of each other, leaving barely sufficient width to allow of the ingress and

egress of large line-of-battle ships. Fortunately, the entrance faces the south-east, so that the anchorage is perfectly secured from the influence of the prevailing winds; and when all the ports on the Coromandel coast are abandoned on account of their insecurity, this fine harbour affords a sure and constant refuge, which can be approached during the prevalence of either monsoon.

In the vicinity of Trincomalee, abundance of game, from the lordly elephant downwards, is to be found; and this, in the opinion of many, more than counterbalances the disadvantages under which the station labours on account of its unhealthiness and complete isolation from the rest of the colony. Deer and elk are often shot within a mile of the fort; and within an hour's ride every kind of animal that exists on the island may be met with. Elephants, however, are rarely encountered in the immediate neighbourhood of the town, but within a few miles they frequently congregate in

large herds. As these leviathans of the earth abound more in Ceylon, than in any other part of the world, an account of the battues formed for their destruction may prove interesting, even to those who have long resided in India, for in no part of the Indian continent is elephant-shooting regarded as in Ceylon—an every-day and ordinary amusement.

Many Anglo-Indians, indeed, are sceptical as to the fact of a single bullet being sufficient to deprive an elephant of life, and are much inclined to doubt the truth of the accounts of elephant-shooting in Ceylon, which occasionally reach them through the medium of their public journals. Some of these *infidels* are wont to assimilate in their darkened minds the deeds of arms done by the sportsmen of Ceylon with those performed by one Falstaff against certain men in buckram. If, then, the facility with which an elephant may be killed astonishes the dwellers in the Carnatic, although so

near the scene of action, it can, perhaps, be scarcely expected that implicit credence will be yielded to the *ipse dixit* of an unknown writer by the British public; but as the facts are notorious to all who have visited the island, I will, even at the risk of being considered a romancer, "a round unvarnished tale deliver" touching the feats of arms performed against the monsters of the jungles of Ceylon.

In all parts of the island elephants are met with, but in the south-eastern provinces they chiefly abound. The face of the country in that direction is less covered with jungle than any other part of Ceylon, and the elephants come forth from the recesses of the forest into the large grass plains that frequently occur. Here is the usual rendezvous of sportsmen in search of elephants. Each individual of the party, who are seldom less numerous than three or four, provides himself with, at least, two double-barrelled guns, the bore of which is, or ought to be,

made to throw two-ounce balls. Some sporting authorities consider this large calibre unnecessary, and assert that a common musket-bullet, if well directed, will answer every purpose. But it is generally thought unsafe to trust to any but the heaviest metal, because a heavy ball, even should it not prove fatal, has the effect of staggering and disconcerting an elephant, and of thus affording time for a second discharge.

On perceiving a herd, the party and their numerous native attendants endeavour by shouting to irritate some individual to turn and charge them. This plan is usually attended with success. Some one of the elephants, provoked by the loud and insulting cries* of his persecutors, quits his fellows, and rushes towards the pursuers, who are always on foot, and somewhat dispersed, so as to effectually support each other by a

* "*Da ! da !*" is the usual cry of the natives on these occasions. The word corresponds with John Bull's "get out!"

flanking fire. The sportsman allows the charging brute to approach within a dozen yards, and then, aiming at that peculiar and deep depression of the skull which is observable immediately above the point where the upper surface of the trunk meets the head, delivers his fire. If the ball takes effect at the spot thus selected, it pierces the brain, which is easily reached through the honeycombed and thin bony substance in this part of the skull, and death instantaneously ensues. But should the bullet strike wide of this singular scoop in the forehead, the second barrel is immediately discharged, and the chances are, that the elephant either falls, or, blinded with the smoke, and furious with pain, sheers off without injuring his antagonist, or wildly rushes past him. In this latter case, the rest of the party pour in a converging volley, which rarely fails to bring down the enraged and now impotent monster, whose dying agonies are speedily terminated by some humane bullet.

First-rate shots, however, seldom require the co-operation of their companions in arms. In the generality of cases, the advancing monster, pierced by a single bullet, falls dead at their feet; but it occasionally happens, that the elephant raises his trunk above his head in such a manner as to render it difficult, if not impossible, to aim at any vital spot. When this occurs, there is no alternative but to fire at this uplifted trunk, and under cover of the smoke to avoid his charge. When thus foiled by his wary enemy, the elephant vents his rage on the first object, animate or inanimate, that attracts his attention. Many native servants and bystanders have in this manner fallen victims to the infuriated animal, when thus excited by European sportsmen.

The defective sight of the elephant, however, gives to his human foes an advantage that almost invariably secures their escape. Whether it be from this cause, or from his natural timidity, it is certain that his charge

rarely, if ever, proves fatal to any individual. During the last ten years, only two Europeans have lost their lives in these encounters. One of them, Major Haddock, of H.M. 97th regiment, attempting to dodge an elephant round a small patch of jungle, ran right into the jaws of the monster that he was endeavouring to avoid, and was immediately trampled to death. The other instance occurred more recently, and the particulars are more generally known.

Mr. Wallett, a gentleman engaged in the civil service of the island, having heard of a tusker,* went out, accompanied only by a native servant, to shoot him. From the rather confused statement of this native, it appears that his first ball merely grazed the elephant, who, in no degree checked, still

* An elephant with full-grown tusks is thus denominated. It is believed that the animal is subject to a disease which peculiarly affects the tusks, and causes their decay. The frequent occurrence of tusks shed in the jungle would seem to support this theory, which, however, requires further confirmation.

continued his onward career. Mr. W. again attempted to fire, but his second barrel, from some unknown cause, did not explode, and having no time to reload or escape, he remained at the mercy of his gigantic enemy, who passed his tusks through the body of the unfortunate young man, and mangled his remains in a shocking manner.

These are the only instances of the triumph of brute force over the skill of man, and it is highly probable that the latter casualty would not have occurred if another sportsman had been present. Many have, however, been within an ace of destruction. Of these hair-breadth escapes, one that befel two officers, who had pledged themselves to avenge the last-mentioned catastrophe, is particularly worthy of mention.

Lieuts. G. and S., of the 90th Light Infantry and 18th Royal Irish regiment, who had undertaken the pious duty of revenging the death of Mr. Wallett, were no novices in *elephantine* warfare. The former officer, in

particular, was considered one of the best elephant shots that had ever appeared in the island. It was, therefore, confidently anticipated that the murdering tusker would ere long depart this life, and that the triumph of his assailants would be equally easy and glorious. The elephant, however, having discovered his powers of destruction, had no intention of descending to the infernal regions without a struggle. The success of his last engagement had, apparently, convinced him of the fallacy of the maxim, laid down by the conqueror of modern Europe, "That, in war, moral force is to physical strength as three to one." On the approach of his new enemies, he accordingly regarded them with the utmost *sang-froid*, and quietly advanced towards them. The scene of this second combat was the same as that of the former. Elephants, if undisturbed, frequently remain for weeks in the vicinity of some favourite spot, which unites the two principal objects of their ambition—good forage and abundance of

water. In the present case, the tusker had doubtless reconnoitred the ground with a military eye, or perhaps, not pretending to greater intelligence than the human race, imagined that the site of his conquest was, somehow or other, connected with his good star, for he made no attempt to decamp from the place during the time that intervened between Mr. W.'s death and the appearance of his avengers. Having arrived within a few paces of their object, the sportsmen fired, but without any considerable effect. One of the bullets, however, struck the right eye of the tusker, and by this fortuitous circumstance the life of one of the officers was saved. Weakened by loss of blood, the elephant fell just as he had overtaken this gentleman, and in the act of falling broke down some bamboo trees, which, striking his intended victim, effectually prevented him from making his escape. Fortunately, he was on the right or blind side of the monster, who did not immediately discover the

near vicinity of his assailant. At length he got his solitary optic to bear upon him, and was about to give him the *coup-de-grace* without further loss of time, when Lieut. S. having reloaded, again approached, and by a well-timed and fatal shot, rescued his friend from his perilous position.*

When, as in this case, an elephant is found alone, he is far more dangerous than when in the society of a herd. On this account, a solitary individual is usually termed a "rogue elephant." The natives are of opinion that these "rogues" have been expelled from the society of their kind for some high misdemeanour, and to this cause their peculiar ferocity is attributable. Certain it is, that there is no exception to this remark regarding the "rogues," and whatever may be the

* Although the centre of the forehead is the favourite, it is not the only point selected by sportsmen for planting a mortal blow. When the left side of the animal is presented, his heart may be reached by a bullet whenever the left fore-leg is moved forward in the act of walking.

original cause of their taste for solitude, it is highly probable that the violence done to the gregarious habits that characterize their species has the effect of producing in them sullenness, and its concomitant, ferocity.

Some sportsmen, satiated with the glories of this sylvan warfare, will not deign to do battle with any save tusked elephants. The tusks form a noble ornament in the houses of these gentlemen, some of whom have a dozen pairs adorning their apartments. Heads of elephants, being more common than tusks, which are extremely rare and valuable even in Ceylon, are everywhere to be seen, and, when tastefully disposed around the large verandahs so universal in the East, have a noble and imposing effect.

When it is found inconvenient to remove the head by way of trophy, the tail is cut off and carefully preserved, as the tails in the possession of a sportsman form the best memoranda of the number of his triumphs. An officer resident at Badulla, in the south-

eastern district, where, as already observed, these huge denizens of the forest are most numerous, has within the last few years slaughtered more than five hundred elephants, and, to satisfy the incredulous, is able to produce that number of caudal trophies.

Kraals are occasionally ordered by the Ceylon Government for the purpose of capturing elephants, with the view of employing them in the transport of heavy weights, government stores, &c. The mode of entrapping elephants has been so often described as to be familiar to all. A circular cordon of peasants is formed around some point selected in one of the districts where the game most abounds. The natives employed gradually converge towards the central spot thus chosen, and drive all before them. Little difficulty is experienced in the capture of the elephant, who, while in a state of nature, does not manifest that sagacity which is so apparent in the animal when

domesticated; and which has, in the estimation of some, obtained for him pre-eminence even over the king of beasts. Female elephants, previously tamed, inveigle the wild and confused brutes within the prepared snare, and time and starvation complete the work of subjugation. When the prisoner appears subdued by the influence of hunger and ill-treatment, he is led forth in charge of two of the female syrens whose sweet voices had in the first instance allured him within the fatal enclosure. These fair monsters no longer regard the captive as their lover, but, on the contrary, unmercifully belabour him if he presume to remind them of their quondam affection. The unhappy victim of female blandishments, half-starved and nearly beaten to death, is generally but too happy to purchase the favour of his persecutors by quietly submitting to the yoke.

The sportsman will readily understand and appreciate the feelings of those who, allured by the abundant sport in the vici-

nity of Trincomalee, and by the occasional visits of elephants to the neighbourhood, prefer the station to any other in the island, notwithstanding its acknowledged insalubrity and eternal heat. Nor is abundance of game the only recommendation possessed by this isolated quarter. The constant arrival of the men-of-war on the Indian station serves to dispel *ennui*, and furnishes a never-failing resource to those who keep boats, and are thus enabled to board approaching vessels.

At Trincomalee, the officers of the navy form a considerable, though a fluctuating, proportion of the society. The flag-ship generally remains there for several months in the year, and six or seven pendants may occasionally be seen within the noble harbour. From their more constant stay at the station, the officers of the admiral's ship may be almost considered as part of its permanent society. They generally give the preference to Trincomalee over Bombay, on

account of the great proximity of the anchorage at the former place to the houses of the residents. At the one station, men-of-war and other large ships anchor at a considerable distance from the haunts of civilized society; at the other, the waters of the harbour wash the walls of the admiral's house, and some of the other principal residences.

This building is situate on a slight eminence, and is the most delightful residence in the place. From its elevation, it enjoys both the land and sea breezes, and commands a view of the harbour and the open sea. It contains a few splendid rooms, to which the other apartments have, in some degree, been sacrificed. The ground inclosed around the house, part of which has been converted into an excellent kitchen garden, may contain about seven acres. The other residences in the station are for the most part in or near the fort, which is separated from the native town and exterior

buildings by an extensive natural glacis, which covers the whole of the land front.

The peninsula, upon which the fort stands, presents, towards the sea, a considerable front. Its width, however, gradually lessens as it approaches the narrow isthmus which connects it with the adjacent country. At this point only is the fort attackable, for the precipitous character of the rocks that completely surround the remainder of the *enceinte* is such, as almost to render the work of art superfluous. The attention and care of the Dutch, who constructed this and most of the other fortifications in the island, have therefore been turned to the defence of the isthmus, the breadth of which barely exceeds two hundred yards. Across this connected tongue of land have been constructed two bastions and a connecting curtain. In their front there is something resembling an earthen demilune, and some faint trace of an ancient covered way may be also detected; but these have nearly dis-

appeared, and the unscreened walls of the bastions may now, from the exterior ground, be seen to their bases; their ditches being in many places filled up, no obstacle whatever is before them. This work may have answered the purpose of the Dutch, who anticipated no attacks save those of the natives. But the economy that neglects the military defence of a place of such vital importance to our interests as Trincomalee is more than questionable. It may, perhaps, be said of Ceylon, as the Highlanders of Argyle were wont to say of their isolated country, "It's a far cry to Lochow." Nevertheless, the island may be reached by an enterprising European enemy, who, if aware of the strong natural position of Trincomalee, and its present neglected state, might cause England to repent the paltry and absurd saving which had deprived her of the first port in the eastern seas, where good harbours are singularly scarce.

Were an enemy in possession of Trinco-

malee, who diligently improved its strong natural defences, his fleet within the harbour might securely defy any naval force that should venture to approach, for no hostile squadron could dare to sail through the narrow strait* by which the port is entered, if the surrounding grounds were judiciously covered with batteries. At present, the only military work defending the harbour is a small irregular field-fort, which crowns one of the head-lands between which the entrance is compressed. The hill on which it stands rises almost perpendicularly from the edge of the water, above the level of which the guns in the fort are elevated more than two hundred and fifty feet. From this lofty eminence they cannot see any object on the surface of the waters that wash the base of the rugged and precipitous

* The breadth of the entrance to the harbour is not more than seven hundred yards, but the depth of water is so considerable, that the largest ships may approach close to either shore.

height whereon "these vile guns" are placed in battery. Such a fort is but little, if at all, better than none. It is, perhaps, worse than useless, for its existence probably has some effect in preventing the construction of more powerful batteries, which, if judiciously placed on less elevated ground, would annihilate any shipping that might attempt to force the entrance.

No harbour can afford greater natural facilities for defence than that of Trincomalee; and it would, perhaps, be difficult to point out a port in the possession of an European power, the military capabilities of which are so completely unaided by art. The principal fort already described has been constructed without reference to the protection of the harbour, from the nearest point of which it is distant nearly two miles. To command the unimportant anchorage under its guns, and to form, at a trifling expense, a *place d'armes* sufficiently formidable to awe the native population, appear to have

been the objects contemplated in its construction. The Dutch navy in the East were not of sufficient importance to demand the vigilant care of their government. Their neglect of the defence of the harbour is thus easily accounted for; but with the change of rulers circumstances have materially altered. That the port of Trincomalee is of such importance as to demand attention and watchful care from the nation to which it now belongs, is a political truism that can scarcely be disputed.

Before quitting the subject of Trincomalee, the hot wells in its vicinity and the celebrated lake of Candelay demand cursory notice; the one as an artificial work, interesting to the antiquary and the political economist; the other as a natural curiosity.

The Lake of Candelay, or, as it is commonly termed, the Candelay Water, is, in the opinion of connoisseurs, the most beautiful lake in Ceylon. It is, indeed, passing fair, and, being enveloped on all sides

by lofty hills, it will bear inspection from several points. This is more than can be said of many of the lakes, which are usually tame at the lower extremities. But it is the peculiar honour of the waters of Candelay, that, in their case, the ground everywhere ascends from their edge with nearly equal degrees of boldness.

It is, perhaps, a mistake to seek for elevations from whence lakes may at a glance be seen in their length, breadth, and, it may be added, in their nakedness. Viewed from those lofty points to which guide-books are so fond of recommending tourists, lakes appear to shrink within themselves, and their real dimensions and proportions are so forcibly impressed on the mind, that the imagination, on which some place so much reliance, cannot again invest them with the attributes of grandeur. For the imagination, even of the most fanciful, has its assigned limits, beyond which it cannot pass. It may add much, but it cannot altogether create.

Greatness of expanse, it may be said, is not absolutely necessary for the formation of perfect lake-scenery; and it has been justly remarked that the proper characteristics of a lake may be lost by too great an expansion of its waters. Thus the Lake of Ontario, and the Lakes Superior and Erie, in the New World, from their immense extent, approximate to the character of inland seas, and, as such, do not participate in those charms peculiar to the scenery of lakes. But for the attainment of perfect beauty, it is indispensably necessary that a lake should cover with its waters the whole, or nearly the whole, of the basin which it occupies. Now this the lakes in Ceylon rarely, if ever, do. Between them and the surrounding mountains there is usually an interval of plain which effectually mars the fair perspective, and reduces their apparent magnitude. To avoid this unsightly object between the mountains and the margin of the lakes, I hereby counsel and advise every good and true Anglo-Cingalese, who

values his peace of mind, and maintains the honour of the colony, to view the island lakes from their banks, and to shun a bird's-eye prospect, as he would ——— a Tic Polonga.

The Candelay lake is situate within thirty miles of Trincomalee, in an extensive and broad valley, around which the ground gradually ascends towards the distant hills that envelop it. In the centre of the valley, a long causeway, principally made of masses of rock, has been constructed to retain the waters that from every side pour into the space inclosed within the circumjacent hills and the artificial dam thus formed. During the rainy season, when the lake attains its greatest elevation, the area of ground, over which the inundation extends, may be computed at fifteen square miles. This work of art, and others of nearly equally gigantic proportions in the island, sufficiently indicate that, at some remote period, Ceylon was a densely populated country, and under a

government sufficiently enlightened to appreciate, and firm to enforce, the execution of an undertaking which, to men ignorant of mechanical powers, must have been an Herculean operation; for, such is the capricious nature of the mountain-streams in this tropical island, where heavy rain frequently falls, without intermission, for many successive days, that no common barrier would suffice to resist the great and sudden pressure that must be sustained on such occasions. Aware of this peculiarity in the character of their rivers, the Cingalese built the retaining wall that supports the waters of the lake of Candelay with such solidity and massiveness, as to defy the utmost fury of the mountain-torrents. Nearly the whole of its extent is formed with vast hewn masses of rock, to move which, by sheer physical force, must have required the united labour of thousands.

In more favoured lands, the object to be gained would by no means compensate for

the toil and time requisite for the damming of a valley by a causeway two miles in extent; but in Ceylon, nature, although bountiful in all other respects, is alternately lavish and chary of the element whereon the labours of agriculture mainly depend. In the eastern provinces, incessant rains are succeeded by long-continued droughts, during which the fiery rays of the sun suck up the innumerable rills that, in the wet season, spread over the face of the country. The largest rivers in this part of the island then subside into petty rivulets; and there being no natural lakes or large sheets of water, the necessity of supplying the want of these by the labours of art becomes apparent. Hence the Cingalese have, from the earliest periods, been attentive to the formation of artificial reservoirs, wherever they could be advantageously constructed; and the lakes of Candelay, Minere, Bawaly, and many others of less note, attest the energy and perseverance of the ancient islanders in such constructions.

When beholding these indications of a numerous and intelligent population, an inquiry as to the causes of their diminution naturally suggests itself to the mind of the spectator. This formerly populous province is now a desert in all but the name; a few scattered huts, buried in the recesses of the jungle, are all that remain of the numerous and crowded towns that must have formerly stood in the neighbourhood of the Candelay and Minere lakes. The average population of this province is now estimated at no more than 11.40 to the square mile. The natives account for this decrease in their numbers by vague traditions of intestine wars, that are supposed to have raged prior to the arrival of the Portuguese in the sixteenth century.

Their early European conquerors may have imported some diseases that until then had been confined to Europe, and have thus given rise to that extreme mortality which has depopulated the island. The decrease

cannot be traced to causes similar to those which wasted the aborigines of the Western hemisphere, when they fell under the iron rule of the Spaniard. The Portuguese have never been characterized as severe in the treatment of their colonies, nor had they the same temptations as those which led the conquerors of the New World to tarnish the lustre of their glory by their unparalleled cruelties.

Between Candelay and Trincomalee, and within an hour's ride from the latter place, are the Hot-wells of Cannia. The adjacent country abounds in quartz, and is covered with large trees, which here usurp the place of dense jungle. There are seven wells, the depth of which varies from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 feet. The whole of these are inclosed within a brick wall, built by the natives, the dimensions of which are 36 feet by 18. Although so near to each other, their temperature is by no means equal, the greatest heat being 105° Fahrenheit, and the least not more

than 86°. Dr. Davy and other writers have adopted the opinion, that this great difference is owing to the larger supply of water which flows into the wells of the greater temperature. The subterraneous supply is irregular, and indicated by the creation of air bubbles every five or six seconds. The springs have the reputation of being beneficial in cutaneous disorders; but, when analyzed, nothing except azote and a small quantity of carbonic acid gas is discoverable in their waters.

In their immediate vicinity stands a temple consecrated to the Hindu god of wisdom, Ganesa, under whose especial care the wells are supposed to be. The natives, accordingly, regard them with veneration, and the wayfarer rarely passes the spot without rendering homage to the deity who is supposed to sanctify it by his constant presence.

CHAPTER IV.

Point de Galle—Its advantages as a Steam Depôt—Palanquins *versus* Coaches—Anecdote of a Maldive Chief—Palace of Mount Lavinia—Sir Edward Barnes—Curries of Ceylon—Aripoo Pearl Fishery—Island of Manar—Paumban Passage—Improvements therein.

THE garrison of Trincomalee usually detach two companies to Point de Galle, a place which, having (on account of its central position with reference to the presidencies of Calcutta and Bombay, and to the port of Aden, at the mouth of the Red Sea) been generally recommended as a steam depôt, is likely to become more familiar to the British public, and of much greater importance than has hitherto been its lot, even in its most prosperous days.

During the late war, Galle was the rendezvous of the homeward-bound Indiamen,

which began to assemble in the course of December, and usually sailed in January, under the convoy of a frigate. The concourse of the numerous passengers during this interval raised the place from its pristine obscurity to its present importance. Its geographical position has preserved the port from any considerable decline, and the attention of the Ceylon Government has, of late years, been attracted to a station which is likely to be brought into near and constant communication with the mother country, and, consequently, to become a point from which infinite and immediate advantages will arise to the colony.

With the view of adding to the wealth and population of Point de Galle, an increase of the garrison has for some time been in contemplation, and additional barracks have been built for the proposed augmentation. The military and most of the civilians of the station live within the walls of the fort, which is of an oblong form, and

as capacious as that of Colombo. Like that fortress, a great portion of the *enceinte* is bathed by the sea; but here the comparison ceases, for the works at Galle are completely commanded by some elevated ground in their immediate vicinity, and thus rendered of little real strength. The residences of both the civilians and military are, for the most part, cooler and more agreeably situated than those in Colombo. The climate is considered particularly good, and the projecting tongue of land, on which the town is built, is refreshed by the alternate monsoons, either of which, as far as Galle is concerned, is a sea breeze. The south-west monsoon is, however, that to which the port is chiefly exposed. During the prevalence of this wind, a heavy sea breaks upon the southern shores of the island, and a rapid current from the westward frequently sets ships to leeward of the harbour, in which case they are obliged to cross the line for the purpose of again standing to the west. This incon-

venience would probably be experienced by any except the most powerful steamers, and even to them, the rush of water round this most southern extremity of British India would, from May to the end of September, prove the most formidable obstacle to the proposed steam-communication between Calcutta and Egypt.

Some authorities are of opinion that Trincomalee would, by reason of its excellent and ever tranquil harbour, be a better point for a steam depôt than Point de Galle, the chief recommendation of which is its centric position on the proposed line of route. This, however, is not the only advantage possessed by that port; it is within seventy miles of the capital of the island, with which it communicates by an excellent road, and, to passengers destined for Ceylon, would thus be a far more desirable station than Trincomalee, which, as has already been observed, is completely isolated from the rest of the colony.

The road which connects Trincomalee with the interior provinces and Colombo is at all times unhealthy, and, during the rainy season, often impassable on account of the swollen torrents that intersect it. The extent of this inferior description of road between Colombo and Trincomalee is about one hundred and ten miles, but the entire distance between those places is more than one hundred and eighty; so that in this respect Galle is a much superior station for a steam depôt to Trincomalee. Were there any decided advantages to be gained by selecting the latter port, the convenience of the passengers to Ceylon, who form but a small proportion to those for Madras and Calcutta, would of course be of little weight; but, by the choice of Trincomalee, the dwellers in the Carnatic and the provinces of Bengal would gain nothing to counterbalance the inconvenience that must in that case be sustained by their island neighbours. Even at Galle, the space between the mouth

of the Red Sea and Calcutta is unequally divided. This disparity would be considerably increased by changing the depôt to Trincomalee, from which place the distance to Calcutta is barely a thousand miles, whereas that to Aden exceeds three thousand. These are the chief advantages of this station, considered as a depôt for steamers. As the proprietors of the steam-vessels on the proposed Cape route, as well as those from the Red Sea, will undoubtedly make Point de Galle one of their depôts, the place cannot, under such auspicious circumstances, fail to rise rapidly in importance, and probably will, at no distant day, outrival the present seat of the island government.

The facility of communication between this port and Colombo will, in the event of the adoption of the comprehensive scheme, induce many Anglo-Indians to avail themselves of the opportunity thus afforded of visiting the capital and interior of the island.

Under the auspices of Mr. Stewart M'Kenzie, the present governor, a coach between Galle and Colombo has been established, and performs the journey (seventy-two miles) in twelve hours—a rate of travelling which, although it will not bear comparison with that usual in England, is much more rapid than the most expeditious dák travelling in India. If the island be, in some respects, less advanced in the march of improvement than the Indian main, it has at all events set a praiseworthy example in the substitution of coaches for those abominable conveyances palanquins, which universally flourish throughout India. Thrice in the week, coaches leave Colombo for both Galle and Kandy, from whence they return on the alternate days. These towns are equally distant from the capital, but the latter station being in the elevated regions of the interior, the journey thither, over an undulating and constantly ascending road, requires more time than is occupied by the

trip from Galle to Colombo, and *vice versâ*. The whole extent of the Galle road runs parallel to, and near, the line of the coast; so that, during the westerly monsoon, the traveller, refreshed by its constant breeze, regards the journey rather as an agreeable drive than as an arduous undertaking, which palanquin travelling, under the most favourable circumstances, most assuredly is. Palanquins have been included in the list of Eastern luxuries, but few, if any, who have experienced the *ennui* and annoyance of being borne, at the slow rate of four miles an hour, on the shoulders of noisy Indian bearers, will admit that they are other than a necessary evil, which, in the absence of more commodious conveyances, must be endured as one of the ills peculiar to Indian life. As such, they must continue to be tolerated wherever the interval between the large stations, scattered throughout India, is so great, and the number of passengers so uncertain, as to render abortive any attempt

to establish a preferable and regular mode of conveyance. But that coaches may be more universally established in India than they are at present, is "a consummation devoutly to be wished." Those in Ceylon have already excited much attention on the continent, and some efforts towards starting a coach between Madras and Bangalore were recently made. The project, or the projectors, however, failed, and the good example of the Anglo-Cingalese has hitherto been lost upon their fellow-countrymen over the water.

Point de Galle is celebrated for the talent displayed by its inhabitants in the workmanship of dressing-cases, work-boxes, and all kinds of jewellery. Homeward-bound Anglo-Indians will gladly seize the opportunity, which a day's delay at this port will afford them, to purchase some of the elegant and curious boxes and other articles constantly exposed for sale in the bazaars, and about the fort of Galle. They are generally made

of calamander wood, which is daily becoming more scarce, and consequently valuable. Their interior is usually subdivided into numerous and ornamental compartments, each of which is of a wood different from that used in any other. Thus each box affords in itself specimens of the most admired and valued kinds of wood in the forests of Ceylon. Calamander, ebony, satin, allemoneal, and jackwood, with various others, are all employed in these mosaic-like boxes. The natives of the Galle district, who are the makers of these work-boxes, are among the most intelligent people in the island; and it is observable that the whole of the country extending from Galle to Colombo is inhabited by a far more civilized race than that which occupies the interior of Ceylon, or than the coasting population on its northern and eastern shores.

Twice in the course of a year, an embassy from the Maldive Islands arrives at Galle to

render homage to the British Government. Those numerous isles, which are included under the general name of Maldive, and, in the seventy-third degree of east longitude, extend from 8° north to the equatorial line, are under the dominion of one potentate, who, by the aid of viceroys in such of the isles as are inhabited, rules over the entire archipelago. The inhabitants of the Maldives are a simple, contented, and almost exclusively a seafaring people. In their boats, which live in the heaviest seas, they venture to trade with the Malabar coast and Ceylon, within the dependencies of which island they are included. Their mercantile transactions are characterized by a spirit of fairness unusual among the crafty natives of the East. In conversing with them, Europeans are generally struck with their extreme simplicity and freedom from guile—the result of their sequestered life and general occupations. A friend of the writer, who was endeavouring to keep up a conversation with

one of the chiefs of the half-yearly embassy, jestingly remarked, in the absence of other topics, that there was a rumour of an approaching war between Great Britain and the Maldives. The aged chieftain, not doubting the assertion of his veracious informant, started up, and earnestly begged that he would contradict so unfounded and injurious a report; "for," added the ambassador, in a confidential whisper, "the King of the Maldives is *plenty 'fraid* of the King of England."

Between Galle and Colombo nothing demanding particular notice occurs, until the traveller arrives at Mount Lavinia, one of the residences of the Governor of Ceylon, distant seven miles from Colombo. This building was erected under the superintendence of the late Sir Edward Barnes, who was particularly partial to the delightful spot on which it stands. The house is situate on a gentle eminence, which, projecting somewhat into the sea, partakes of

the character of a headland. When Colombo is approached from the sea, it is the first object that meets the eye, and is therefore noted by navigators frequenting the port as a conspicuous landmark. The surrounding grounds are extremely English in appearance, and unite in a high degree the charms of luxuriant nature with those that are produced by art. If the edifice have a fault, it consists in a too rigid adherence to the style of buildings in England, which, being adapted for a colder clime, cannot be good models for the construction of houses under the vertical sun of the tropics. In this respect the Pavilion at Kandy, also built during the government of Sir E. Barnes, is infinitely superior to Mount Lavinia; but, notwithstanding this objection, there are few, if any, residences on the island preferable to this. The murmur of the sea, as it gently ripples on

> The short, smooth space of yellow sand
> Between it and the greener land;

the never-failing breeze which reaches this spot when less favoured sites feel not the influence of its breath; and, above all, the romantic and pleasing aspect of the place and adjacent country, form a whole which merits the appellation of an Oriental Elysium.

Here I would offer a humble tribute to the memory of Sir Edward Barnes, a name deservedly dear to the natives of Ceylon. Time has not rendered them oblivious of that eminent and estimable man, who alike won their affections and commanded their respect and admiration. At different periods, Sir Edward was governor of the island for eleven years, during which innumerable and important improvements were planned and carried into effect. Among these, the construction of the road from Colombo to Kandy, and from thence to Newera Ellia, stands pre-eminent. To the latter place, the distance from Colombo is more than one hundred miles, the whole extent of

which, at the period in question, was a savage wilderness, covered with dense and unhealthy jungles. When to this it is added, that the plains of Newera Ellia are upwards of six thousand feet above the level of the Lake of Colombo, and that the surface of the intervening country is wild and rugged in the extreme, the task of forming a good carriage-road under such circumstances will be admitted as truly arduous.

From the side of Galle the approach to Colombo is through an extensive and densely populated suburb, along the sea-shore. Great numbers of the natives in this vicinity are fishermen, who gain an easy and certain livelihood by their vocation. The supply, although great, is scarcely equal to the demand, as the poorer classes live almost exclusively on the inferior kinds of fish, prepared in curries. The curry of the native of Ceylon is widely different from that of the Hindu. The abundance of cocoa-nuts in Ceylon enables the islander to make the

white contents of that fruit a principal ingredient in the composition of his curry. Saffron is also freely introduced into the curry of Ceylon, so that its appearance and flavour bear no more resemblance to that usually prepared in India, than to the imitations of this Eastern dish which are occasionally, but vainly, attempted in England: connoisseurs generally give the preference to the dark and more fiery Indian curries, but most of the European residents in Ceylon prefer that peculiar to the land of their adoption.

The industrious fishermen of Colombo, who form a large proportion of its suburban population, complain bitterly of a regulation, which certainly does appear preposterous, and at variance with those prudential considerations that would labour to avert even the possibility of infectious disease. They are compelled to bring their fish to certain market-places, where only they are permitted to dispose of them. The injustice

and absurdity of such a regulation are self-evident, for, not to speak of the loss of valuable time, the more delicate fish are by no means improved by the journey from the beach to the market under the burning sun of the tropics. The object of this singular and arbitrary law is to collect the Government dues, which are levied in proportion to the value of the finny spoil, thus making a direct tax upon the enterprise and skill of the fisherman.

After passing Colombo, the coast road, which completely encircles the island, becomes less interesting, and the features of the country, as they approach its northern extremity, become tame and monotonous. The petty towns on this part of the western coast* are chiefly inhabited by a population engaged in fishing and the collection of salt,

* In each of these towns are to be found the ruins of ancient forts, built by the Dutch, who, conscious of their unpopularity, always secured themselves against any sudden attack by works sufficiently strong to repel the utmost efforts of the natives.

of which there are large *depôts* in the island of Calpentyn and at Putlam.

No place worthy of mention occurs between Colombo and Jaffna, except Aripoo, opposite which are numerous and valuable oyster-beds, that yield a considerable, but an uncertain, annual revenue to the Government of Ceylon. They are fished in the months of March and April, and in some years the pearls found within the oysters have added to the island revenue the sum of £40,000. The average soundings over the principal banks are six fathoms. A large number of divers are employed, the most expert of whom have, by long practice, rendered themselves capable of remaining beneath the surface of the water more than a minute. The numbers of the divers deter the numerous sharks that hover around from making an attack upon these amphibious beings, who, however, will not descend to the "slimy bottom of the deep" unless professed charmers of sharks are engaged to

ward off the assaults of these ravenous monsters. The Ceylon Government, finding that without the voice of the charmer nothing will induce the diver fearlessly to seek the ocean treasures, pay a large sum to secure the services of one of those Eastern magicians. When brought on shore, the oysters are sold by public auction to the highest bidder. As it is impossible to judge from the external appearance of an oyster-shell of the value of the pearls contained within it, this auction becomes a description of lottery, in which some fortunate holders realize large sums, and others, on the contrary, lose their little all.

Twelve miles to the north of Aripoo is the island of Manar, which, stretching away to the westward, approaches the Indian coast more nearly than any other part of Ceylon. Manar itself is a wretched cluster of huts, but from its vicinity to the continent, and its harbour, which, though shallow, is completely sheltered, it is a place of some

commercial importance. The road between it and Aripoo traverses a wide open plain, which forms a relief to the uniformity of the eternal jungle, that, wherever the hand of man has not cleared the ground, meets, and by its constant presence palls upon, the eye. The islet, on which the hovels of Manar stand, is separated from the main land by an indent of the sea, nearly two miles in breadth, but so shallow as to render it easy for the palanquin-bearers to carry over their *live cargo* without the aid of a boat. In this sequestered and barren site there is an appearance of desolation and an absence of animation, that startle the traveller, and cause him to hasten his departure from a spot, than which it is impossible to conceive one more dismal and wretched. At this place, so fertile in dreary associations, the only object that appeared to me at all worthy of notice is a fort, upon the construction of which the Dutch appeared to have bestowed more care than was their

wont in the generality of the numerous works erected by them on various parts of the island coast. In this isolated spot they probably thought it necessary to maintain a strong garrison, to facilitate the land communication between Colombo and Jaffnapatam, and also to guard against the not improbable event of an hostile visit from their European neighbours over the water. The fort is now used as a salt *depôt*, and garrisoned by a few invalids.

From the western extremity of the island of Manar to Ramnad, which is the nearest point on the continental shore, the distance is fifty miles; but the intervening space is so choked up with innumerable islets, rocks, and sand-banks, as to prevent vessels, even of the lightest draught of water, from passing the long and uninterrupted obstruction thus formed between the Gulf of Manar and Palk's Passage, as the seas on either side of this natural barrier are called, that to the southward being known as the Manar Gulf,

and the confined strait to the northward as Palk's Passage. To form, through this combination of obstacles, a channel sufficiently deep for the purposes of the coasting craft, the average draught of which is about eight feet, has for a considerable period been a desideratum with both the Governments of Madras and Ceylon; but it was not until 1836 that any decided measures were taken for the improvement of the shallow passage, which, from time immemorial, had existed near Paumban, a small village on the sacred isle of Ramiseram, and, in default of a better, had always been the line of communication frequented by the coasters. At this point, the rocky bar is more than four hundred yards wide, but an irregular and winding channel, of five feet in average depth, extended throughout its entire breadth. On arriving at either extremity of this narrow and difficult passage, the coasters were in the habit of unloading, in order to lessen their draught of water.

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Even with this precaution, much injury was sustained, and delay caused, by their taking the ground—an occurrence which, in those days, was the rule, not the exception. The detention arising from this vexatious impediment frequently exceeded two or three days.

The first operations of the Madras engineer officers, who are employed on this service, were directed to the formation of a line of channel as nearly straight as circumstances would allow. The rock, which is of a soft and porous nature, easily yields to the operations of the miner. The masses, detached by blasting, are brought up by divers, great numbers of whom have been constantly employed, and deposited on rafts, placed for their reception. In this manner, without the aid of machinery, the quantity of rock brought to the surface during the day has often amounted to one hundred tons. The transparency of the water over these rocks has hitherto considerably lessened the

difficulties of the undertaking. The destruction effected by an explosion can, almost immediately, be perceived through nine feet of water, which is the uniform depth now obtained throughout the whole extent of the channel. The breadth of the passage is also increased to one hundred feet, and indicated by buoys, so that the country craft can now sail through this once formidable impediment without any delay whatever, or requiring the assistance of the pilots, who are the only class that complain of this great improvement in the navigation of the strait that divides Ceylon from the Indian main.

A party of the Madras sappers and miners are still employed on this service, and it is in contemplation to increase the depth of the channel to twelve or fourteen feet. The vast advantages that would undoubtedly result to Ceylon if vessels of this draught were enabled to trade direct between the island and the numerous places on the

Coromondal coast, south of Madras, are self-evident; and as additional facility of communication has ever been found to increase the previous intercourse, it may be fairly presumed that this political axiom would be illustrated in the case now in question.

Although Ceylon is the principal gainer by the clearing of the Paumban Passage, the island Government has not contributed its quota towards the expenses of the undertaking, which have been solely incurred by the Madras presidency. It is, however, said that the Government of Madras declined the co-operation of that of Ceylon, which offered to bear a moiety of the total expense, including the services of the military artificers and others employed. While, therefore, no want of energy is attributable to the authorities of Ceylon, justice demands that all the credit arising from the planning and successful issue of this arduous undertaking should be rendered to that

Government which directed its execution and defrayed the attendant expenses, and to those officers of engineers under whose able and unwearied supervision the operations have been so successfully carried on.

CHAPTER V.

The Kandian provinces—Coaches in Ceylon—Novel mode of propelling coach-horses—Captain Dawson's monument—Peradinia Bridge—River Mahavilaganga—Flood of 1834—Kandian agriculture—Appearance of Kandy.

THE only portion of Ceylon of which full details have hitherto been given is the belt of territory near its shores, that has for ages been in the possession of Europeans. But he, whose knowledge of this romantic isle is confined to its coast, will scarcely conceive the extreme grandeur of its interior provinces, in which nearly all the interest that attaches to Ceylon is centred. The elevated table-land of the Kandian provinces is raised nearly two thousand feet above the level of the sea, and enjoys a temperature that unites all the advantages of an Asiatic clime with

those peculiar to Europe. From this lofty region numerous shoots arise, and attain elevations varying from two to six thousand feet. These various degrees of loftiness enable the agricultural and commercial speculator to avail himself of the different temperatures that are thus produced.

Experience has proved that, in Ceylon, lands elevated three thousand feet above the sea are, *cæteris paribus*, the most favourably situated for the culture of the coffee tree. A greater elevation, or, in other words, a lower temperature, is found requisite for the production of the fruits and vegetables of Europe. In the plains of Newera Ellia these are cultivated without difficulty, and attain the highest perfection; but the peculiar keenness of the mountain air of that station is found to be extremely inimical to the growth of the staple productions of the island.

Between Colombo and Kandy, as before observed, a coach has for some years been

established. To invalids recommended to exchange the sultry air of the low country for the more bracing climate of the Kandian provinces, the advantages of such a rapid, and at the same time agreeable, means of communication, are incalculable. The journey is in this manner performed in twelve hours, one of which is allowed for breakfasting, bathing, &c., at the half-way house. Dâk travelling is not only more expensive, but slower than the progress of the Ceylon coaches. I know not how these matters are arranged in India, where palanquins, and every thing connected with them, have attained the acmé of perfection; but in Ceylon, the expense of journeying dâk by palanquins would greatly surpass that of the coaches, and the time required for this trip would be about twenty hours. Thus the proprietors of the coaches that run from Colombo to Kandy and Point de Galle are well aware that their demand, though somewhat exorbitant, must, in the absence of

cheaper and more expeditious means of conveyance, be complied with.

At five A.M. these coaches start from Colombo to their respective destinations, and thus accomplish a third of the journey in the cool of the morning. The half-way house is reached about eleven A.M., when the passengers alight, bathe, and breakfast. For these agreeable occupations an hour is allowed, which is not more than necessary for the due performance of Oriental ablutions, and the satisfactory discussion of an Anglo-Indian *déjeûner*. After quitting this hotel, or rest-house, you begin to ascend the lower range of the Kandian hills; and the country, which has hitherto retained a flat or slightly undulating appearance, becomes at every step more romantic and wild.

When the Kandy coach was first established, the funds of the proprietors did not admit of the purchase of good or even tolerable cattle. The discarded hack, the cast trooper, and, in short, all four-footed ani-

mals, however vile or vicious, that could be picked up at a cheap rate, found favour in the eyes of the coach proprietors, and were accordingly enlisted in their service. Grand equestrian exhibitions were frequently enjoyed by the passengers of those days. Some of the steeds *would* go, while others, on the contrary, adopted a different policy, and stood fast. In the latter case, the most approved mode was to attach a long rope to one of the fore legs of the refractory charger, and, having beat up for volunteers amongst the natives, to haul away upon the same; while one party thus engaged the enemy in front, another detachment vexed his rear with such missiles and weapons as happened to be at hand. The grand object of getting him under weigh was in this manner generally attained. Finding "the pressure from without" altogether insupportable, the unhappy beast usually exchanged his passive resistance for an active attempt to upset the coach. Luckily, there are no elections in

Ceylon, or party purposes, as in the case of the voters famed in Pickwickian annals, might have converted the Kandy coaches into deadly engines of destruction against political opponents. But, as it happens that the absence of electioneering in the land of the East prevents such wholesale butchery, history does not record any loss of life as the *finale* of any of the scenes above described. Philanthropists will rejoice to hear that, in Ceylon, no young and interesting widow has ever, from these causes, been "left lamenting," and that these dangers may now be said to belong to other days.

The writer has been thus diffuse on the subject of Ceylon coaches, partly because he considers that their substitution for palanquins in India, wherever such change may be practicable, is highly desirable, and partly on account of the desire of the Anglo-Indian community, expressed in their public journals, to learn somewhat of those conveyances, with a view to their ultimate adop-

tion. Although a resident in Ceylon, where palanquins are at a discount, he, at different periods, travelled over a great extent of country in them, and is thus enabled to speak from experience as to the many and various ills peculiar to those locomotive coffins. None save those who have traversed some hundreds of miles in a palanquin can, perhaps, fully appreciate the *ennui* and discomfort of that *luxury;* and it is permitted to all to do " the state some service" by recommending what may appear manifest improvements.

There are few, if any, objects in Ceylon which more forcibly recall England and English associations to the mind of the Anglo-Cingalese* than the road between Colombo and Mahahaine, the half-way hotel

* By this appellation I respectfully beg to designate the European dwellers in Ceylon, in contradistinction to the term Anglo-Indian, whose genus is confined within the shores of Hindoostan, and with whom the Anglo-Cingalese hath little or nothing in common.

on the Kandy road. After passing the latter station, it traverses an Alpine region, the features of which are strikingly dissimilar to the fair level aspect of England; but in the lower country, the extensive green fields and gently undulating surface of the ground, when viewed in conjunction with the avenue-like road, bear a strong resemblance to the scenes of home.

It is in the near vicinity of Kandy that the elevation of that place above Colombo is principally obtained. After winding through the minor passes at the foot of the hills, some of which are extremely beautiful, the road commences to ascend the grand pass of Cadaganava. The length of the road from the foot to the summit of the pass is somewhat more than three miles. About a quarter of a mile from Captain Dawson's monument, which stands near the head of the mountain-gorge, may be enjoyed a magnificent view of the country stretching towards Colombo. Far as the eye can reach, the

road, winding through the wilderness of jungle, is distinguishable; and this indication of the presence of civilized man affords a striking contrast to the wildness of the mountain scenery around. The more you gaze on the wild landscape, the more you feel inclined to appreciate at its true value the enterprise and labour necessary for the formation of a carriage-road through these "deserts idle," and to rejoice that a monument commemorative of the abilities and exertions of its constructor marks the scene of their display. This erection, which is about one hundred and thirty feet in height, may be ascended by means of a spiral staircase in the interior. From its summit may be seen a considerable extent of country, and travellers seldom pass without ascending to reconnoitre. An inscription on the pedestal tells the purpose for which it was raised. The purport of it is, that the English society of Ceylon, to mark their admiration of the professional talents of Captain Dawson, of

the Royal Engineers, raised the monument on the spot where his unwearied efforts led to his lamented and untimely decease, which deprived the service to which he belonged of one of its most valuable members.

At Paradinia, a village four miles from Kandy, the Colombo road meets the river Mahavilaganga, across which a single-arched bridge has been thrown by Colonel Fraser, the deputy quarter-master general to the forces in Ceylon. The breadth of the stream is here somewhat contracted, and, by the aid of projecting buttresses, the span of the arch has been reduced to two hundred and five feet. The bridge is entirely built of the beautiful satin—a wood almost peculiar to the forests of Ceylon, where it grows in great abundance. The arch is composed of four treble ribs,* the interval between which

* The sum of the depths of the ribs, together with the intervals between them, amounts to eight feet. The average length of the beams employed in the construction of the bridge is sixteen feet.

is five feet. Every beam used in the construction of the bridge is so inserted as to admit of removal without endangering the safety of the fabric. This is of the utmost value in a tropical clime, where wood is found to decay much more rapidly than in lower temperatures.

The Kandians, relying on their ancient tales and legends, had formed an opinion that the bridging of the "Great River," which the word *Mahavilaganga* imports, was impracticable. With this persuasion, they were in the habit of daily assembling to gaze on the gradual progress of the work, and laugh to scorn the vain and impotent labours of the *pale faces;* but when, to their amazement, the bridge was found to stand without the supporting framework, their admiration knew no bounds, and they looked with fear and wonder on the Europeans who had brought to a successful termination an undertaking considered by them beyond the power of man. The upholders of the ancient

Kandian dynasty have, however, little cause to congratulate themselves on the construction of a bridge which, although eminently useful to them in their civil occupations, is at the same time a military communication that greatly tends to secure the permanent domination of the English over their romantic and, until of late, independent country.

In ordinary cases, the crown of the arch of the Paradinia Bridge is elevated sixty-seven feet above the level of the Mahavilaganga; but this stream, in common with all others which have their sources in the Alpine regions of the interior, is liable to extreme fluctuations during the rainy season. In 1834, immense damage was sustained in consequence of the overflowing of the "Great River," after a long continuance of heavy and incessant rain. The effects of the flood were indeed awful. The waters of the Mahavilaganga rose to within seven feet of the lofty Paradinia Bridge (sixty feet

above their ordinary level), and sweeping over the adjacent country, laid waste a large extent of fertile and cultivated land. Fields, that with great toil had been reclaimed from the jungle, were at one "fell swoop" restored to their pristine state. Every insignificant rill swelled into a fearful torrent, and bearing down trees, rocks, and soil in its irresistible course, changed the fair and fertile valleys through which it raged into a desolate wilderness. Nor was inanimate nature the only sufferer by this tremendous visitation. The Mahavilaganga was choked with a multitude of the beasts of the forest. The wild pig, the deer, with a variety of smaller game, were to be seen floating on the broad bosom of the foaming river, and even the strength of the monarch of the woods availed him not in that fearful hour, for, ever and anon the huge and bloated body of an elephant came sweeping down "the angry flood," giving to the dwellers in the low country, who beheld the floating Leviathan,

the fullest intimation of the "wreck of matter" in the Kandian provinces.

While on the subject of Ceylon rivers, it may not be out of place to remark, that the rapidity with which the petty rivulets that water the interior provinces swell after much rain is so great, as to baffle all calculation. In a few minutes, these mountain rills vary in depth five or six feet. They subside in nearly as short a space of time. The innumerable though trifling streams which feed the principal channels in the valleys may account for this; but persons unacquainted with the capricious character of these mountain rivers are often astounded at finding the dry ravine of the morning metamorphosed before the evening into a rapid and dangerous torrent.

After passing Paradinia, the vicinity of Kandy, or, as the natives call it, "Mahaneura," is indicated by the more cultivated aspect of the country. Every spot of ground is turned to profit by the industry of the

Kandians, whose *forte* lies in agriculture, and who are perfectly *au fait* in the art of irrigation — an art peculiarly requisite for the due culture of this undulating country, where an acre of level ground is rarely if ever met with. The numerous terraces in which the paddy-lands or rice-fields are found immediately arrest attention, from their novel and pleasing appearance. These terraces are small patches of level ground, which are artificially formed in every valley, where the ascent of the ground will admit of their introduction. Viewed from a distance, they resemble gigantic steps up the mountain side. The advantages of this system are obvious. Every foot of land thus becomes available for the culture of rice, which staple production of the tropics will flourish only on level sites, it being absolutely necessary to lay paddy-lands under water for a certain period. By the Kandian method of forming a valley into a succession of terraces, each of these is in its

turn watered by the minute rills that trickle down every fissure in the rugged mountains around.

On approaching the former capital of the Kandian dynasty from the side of Colombo, the lake, embosomed within encircling mountains that on every side rise to elevations varying from four hundred to two thousand feet, is the first object which meets the eye of the traveller. The impression thus produced is highly favourable, and is by no means diminished on a nearer approach. The bungalows and villas that stud the margin of the lake give an animated appearance to the landscape, and relieve the stern grandeur of the rugged heights which "repose on their shadows" in the waters that bathe their feet.

The coach, in which the reader has somewhat tardily travelled from Colombo, traverses the small town of Kandy, and deposits the wayfarer, if a stranger in the land, at an hotel that has for some time been

established in this happy valley for the especial benefit of invalids and others, who, allured by its high reputation, pay a flying visit to the place; but the merits and demerits of this favourite station are not to be so lightly treated, and the wearied reader will doubtless appreciate the advantages of a momentary pause, after having effected a lodgment in the heart of the Kandian territory.

CHAPTER VI.

Kandy—Kandian palaces and temples—Boodhoo—Boodhaical religion—The Mahawanse—Kandian women—Requisites in female beauty—A Kandian belle—The Rhodias—The Veddah tribe—Anecdote regarding them—Observations on the Veddahs.

THE basin in which Kandy, or Mahaneura (the great city), stands, is of an oval form, about four miles in length by two in breadth, the town being at the further and wider extremity. Its entire length is intersected by a mountain stream, which, after feeding the artificial lake of Kandy, divides the valley into two nearly equal parts, and pours itself into the Mahavilaganga. Like the happy valley of Rasselas, it is bounded on every side by lofty and apparently inaccessible heights. It has, however, three communications with the external world. The roads

to Colombo, Trincomalee, and Badulla, a military post of some importance, radiate from this common centre. That leading to Newera Ellia branches off from the Colombo road in the vicinity of Paradinia. Without the cordon of mountains, which encircle and isolate the valley, flows the deep and rapid Mahavilaganga, and, as if to make security doubly sure, that river, after passing the bridge at Paradinia, forms a deep loop, near the extremity of which the town of Kandy is situated.

Whether the Kandian monarch, in selecting the site of his capital, was influenced by the apparent strength of these localities, I know not. Certain it is, that he would have shewn the better part of valour had he chosen some spot more remote from the stronghold of his European enemies, who, being within seven days' march of "the great city," occasionally made known their proximity by unceremonious visits. Whenever hostilities broke out between the Kan-

dians and the Dutch, the sacking of the city of the former usually opened the ball. The repetition of these hostile visits must at length have become disagreeable to both parties, as the Kandians, according to the approved mode of warfare amongst all mountaineers, past, present, and to come, never remained to do the honours to their uninvited guests, but betook themselves to the inaccessible fastnesses in the recesses of their impervious forests. In these cases, famine and disease did the work of the sword. After a few weeks' occupation of the deserted town, the Dutch, thinned in numbers, and weakened by the privations inseparable from warfare in such a difficult and inhospitable country, retired from the scene of their barren triumph.

The beauty and fertility of the surrounding country probably compensated for the annoyance of such disagreeable neighbours. Its salubrity, which is partly owing to the vicinity of the lake, is quite unrivalled in

this land of rank vegetation, and its concomitant—malaria. Kandy has, in truth, altered the unfavourable impression that formerly obtained regarding the insalubrious climate of the interior provinces of Ceylon. The extreme mortality of European troops stationed within these provinces was at one period truly appalling. In some instances, British detachments, consisting of one or two companies, entirely melted away. The 51st and 65th regiments are mentioned as having been nearly annihilated by the pestilential climate to which they were exposed in the short and disastrous campaign of 1803. The causes which operated such baneful results are probably in some measure diminished, but can scarcely be considered as no longer in existence. The unhealthy localities, which formerly proved "the white man's grave," are now unoccupied by European troops, who are for the most part concentrated in the cantonments of Kandy, and in the healthful plains of Newera Ellia.

The principal *lions* at Kandy are the temples consecrated to Boodhoo and the minor gods. His late majesty's palace is still in existence, but, having been improved and modernized by Europeans, presents an appearance totally different from that which, in the palmy days of royalty, was wont to dazzle the eyes of the natives. An octagonal building, flanking the *palais royal*, and a deep moat in its front, convey the idea of a castellated place of strength. The other extremity is terminated by a range of apartments, wherein the secluded ladies of the royal harem concealed their charms from all save their liege lord and sovereign. In front of the harem, the sun and all the stars of the firmament are carved in stone, and produce an extremely striking and Oriental effect. You enter the edifice through a massive and rather grand archway. After ascending two or three flights of stone steps, and passing through sundry antechambers, you reach

the place where once stood the hall of audience.

Some mischievous utilitarians have metamorphosed this hall, which was no doubt a very grand affair in its day, into a nondescript building, which performs double duty as a criminal court and as a chapel. The judges' desk, in the opinion of the profane, makes an admirable pulpit; but this introduction of the money-changers into the temples is justly considered by the clerical establishment of Ceylon as a grievous and crying evil.

Truth compels me to admit that the romantic feeling, with which the antiquary wanders over this "sometime" palace, is greatly abated by the presence of many similar anomalies. The Pateripooa, as the octagonal building above mentioned was formerly denominated, is now degraded into a military prison, and the *boudoir* of. "the bride of the sun and sister of the moon," into a powder-magazine. Under these un-

favourable circumstances, a matter-of-fact person would, perhaps, view the *quondam* abode of royalty with indifference; but those who are gifted with a small share of imagination are rarely disappointed.

Temples are profusely scattered over the island, but in the good town of Kandy do they chiefly abound. The priests of Ceylon, like those of Melrose, are said to have

> "Made good kail
> On Fridays, when they fasted."

Their voice was omnipotent in the Kandian cabinet; peace or war was decided by the *fiat* of these secular and ecclesiastical masters and pastors. None of their countrymen more cordially detest the British rule, which has inflicted a "heavy blow and great discouragement" on these meddling prelates. They still hover near the scene of their former glories, where the sacred edifices of the Delada Malegawa, the Malwatté, and Asignie Wihêmes, afford them shelter. Of these,

the first is the most celebrated. It contains the tooth of Boodhoo, the tutelar deity of the island.

A tradition somewhat similar to that which, in the thirteenth century, obtained among the Scotch concerning the stone at Scone, belongs to this sacred relic. It is regarded by the Kandians as the palladium of their liberties, and until the English succeeded in capturing it, their dominion over the country was insecure. Resistance to the fortunate possessors of this inestimable tooth is, in the opinion of all devout Boodhists, utterly vain and impotent. This impression materially aided us in effecting the subjugation of the inland provinces, and checks the open display of any lurking disaffection that may exist among the priests and their adherents.

Europeans are rarely permitted to behold this outward and visible sign of the favour of Boodhoo. It is deposited in a small golden case, the exterior of which is com-

pletely covered with precious stones and pearls of immense value. This is fitted into a similar, but somewhat larger, case, called a karandua. There are five of these karanduas, four of which are in this manner successively imbedded.

From the temples of Kandy to the religious tenets professed therein the transition is natural. In Ceylon, the religion of the great bulk of the people is that inculcated by Boodhoo. Boodhists deny the existence of an eternal and almighty Being. They believe that the world was never other than at present, and that it will thus continue for ever. After death, the Boodhists imagine that mankind assume the forms of the inferior animals, and transmigrate for many centuries, until annihilation relieves them from this state of constant transition. Far from regarding the idea of annihilation with horror, the Boodhist looks forward to this "sinking into nought" as the termination of his worldly toils, which are curtailed or

protracted according to the degree of favour he may find in the eyes of the deity he adores.

This extraordinary religion has spread over an immense portion of Asia. It appears to have had its origin in the remote countries watered by the Brahmaputra and its tributaries, and from thence to have extended over China, Japan, and the Burmese empire. In such widely scattered regions, the Boodhaical system has undergone numerous modifications of minor importance, but its leading features are always distinguishable, and in no material degree altered. It is believed to exist in its greatest purity in the great peninsula comprising the kingdoms of Ava and Siam. In those countries devotion is rendered exclusively to Boodhoo, but in the Chinese empire and in Ceylon the gods Vidrun, Kattragam, Samen, and Pitia, share with Boodhoo in the adoration of the people. In truth, the latter deities, having immediate control over all worldly

affairs, are often besought with a fervour unknown to those who exclusively worship Boodhoo, whose power cannot affect the present weal or woe of his followers, but only extends to their happiness in a future state. The passing ills of this life are shunned by the more general devotees with a degree of anxiety that is rarely experienced with regard to those more terrible calamities, which only appear in the distance, and through the medium of an uncertain and ill-defined futurity.

It were easy to dilate on the Boodhaical system and its founder, who is supposed to have flourished about six hundred years before the commencement of the Christian era. Such a topic is, however, at variance with the design of this work, which is intended only for the eye of the general reader, who will doubtless be satisfied with the brief sketch already presented. To those lovers of Oriental lore who would fain explore the mysteries of Boodhism, and

trace its influence in the history of Ceylon, I beg to recommend a perusal of the *Maha Wanse*, a Cingalese historical document, which has been translated by Mr. Turnour, a gentleman now holding a high civil appointment in the island, whose great talents and unwearied assiduity have been successfully exerted in penetrating the tangled labyrinth of commingled truth and fiction, which, in the lapse of ages, has wound itself round this ancient and interesting record.

Women take no prominent part in the ceremonies of Boodhaical worship. The European infidel, who anticipates the happiness of meeting the Cingalese fair at the temples of the ungallant votaries of Boodhoo, will generally encounter disappointment. The voice of the charmer is in these sacred edifices dispensed with, and in its stead, the sound of barbaric horns and drums clangs discordantly on the offended ear. The clamour arising from Kandian temples can be fully appreciated only by those who have

had the misfortune of residing within hearing of their "dreadful revelry." Each drum seems to beat without the slightest regard to time, and in utter defiance of all the laws of melody. The monotonous din thus produced is occasionally enlivened by a horrid squeak from a native instrument, which rejoices in the euphonious name of *horanawa.*

It must not, however, be imagined that the absence of *le beau sexe* from these delightful concerts is caused by any lack of devotion on their part; on grand occasions they muster in great force, and add much to the interest of the Parraharra, and other national processions, that periodically take place. The Cingalese women have generally good figures, but the same degree of praise can scarcely be extended to their faces, which are seldom handsome, or even pretty. This description applies to those who are congregated in towns and villages. In the country, where

their occupations are less sedentary, the traveller will often encounter fair and, indeed, beauteous maidens, whose charms are almost above criticism. The following description of the *points* of a Cingalese belle, which was given by a Kandian chief to a late writer on Ceylon,* will interest all who profess themselves connoisseurs in female loveliness.

"Her hair should be voluminous, like the tail of the peacock, long, reaching to the knees, and terminating in graceful curls; her eyebrows should resemble the rainbow; her eyes the blue sapphire and the petals of the Manilla flower. Her nose should be like the bill of the hawk. Her lips should be bright and red, like coral on the young leaf of the iron-tree. Her teeth should be small, regular, and closely set, and like jasmine buds. Her neck should be large and round, resembling the benigodea. Her chest should be capacious; her breasts firm and conical,

* Dr. Davy.

like the yellow cocoa-nut; and her waist small, almost small enough to be clasped by the hand. Her hips should be wide; her limbs tapering; the soles of her feet without any hollow; and the surface of her body in general soft, delicate, smooth, and rounded, without the asperities of projecting bones and sinews."

There is but a trifling difference between the personal appearance of the generality of the Cingalese and that of the natives on the Coromandel coast. The lowlanders have for ages traded and mixed with their continental neighbours; and having, during the last three centuries, been under the rule of Europeans, they have gradually lost those minute, but distinct, peculiarities belonging to their forefathers. But the exclusive habits and limited intercourse of the Kandians with the inhabitants of the seaboard provinces have prevented this gradual change from affecting them, and the result is a marked difference between their manners

and persons and those of the Cingalese. They are probably but little, if at all, different in this respect from what the islanders were prior to the arrival of the Portuguese, in 1505. The independence which, until of late, they possessed, appears to have had the effect of elevating their general bearing above that of the fawning Hindoo. They are taller, darker, and better made than the natives of the low country, for whom they entertain a sovereign contempt, which is duly returned, with compound interest. The hair of these mountaineers is suffered to grow to a considerable length, and considered by them to be a necessary concomitant of true dignity. Compared with the closely cropped Moorman, they certainly appear to great advantage, and have a superior nobleness of mien which, if their craniums were shorn of their natural ornament, would, perhaps, in a great measure disappear.

Taken collectively, the Cingalese may, perhaps, be pronounced inferior in personal

beauty to the natives of Hindoostan; but among them there are some striking exceptions to this general observation. The admirers of brunettes may occasionally have the felicity of beholding at the balls, given at Government House, a few Kandian belles, who, were it not for their complexion,

"The shadowed livery of the burnished sun,"

would be deemed specimens of surpassing loveliness. In the province of Kornegalle there was, and probably still is, a dusky beauty, whom I do not remember ever to have seen equalled in the "clime of the East." Her classically low forehead, shaded by luxuriant masses of jet black hair, her Grecian nose, and short upper lip, were each perfect, and, as a whole, incomparable. If her stature was somewhat above the height which the great masters of sculpture have assigned as the limit of feminine proportions, it seemed so justly to harmonize with her general *tournure*, that the most fastidious critic could not wish it to be less. Yet she

possessed nothing of that commanding air to which height is usually considered a necessary accompaniment. She appeared rather formed for love than for command; and in her large and liquid eye the disciple of Lavater might discern the languor and apathy that pervaded "the soul within."

It has been said that the physiognomy of mountaineers is influenced by the bold scenery amid which they reside, and which is supposed to impart somewhat of *hardiesse* to their manners and aspect. Whether the mode of life and active habits of the dwellers in elevated regions may give some appearance of plausibility to this theory is a question that may be submitted to the discussion of physiognomists and phrenologists. But from what cause soever it may proceed, and some of them have already been cited, there is certainly an evident dissimilarity between the Kandians and the Cingalese, the highlanders and the lowlanders of Ceylon. The latter are the children of servility; which

seems stamped on their brows by the hand of Nature, and, by their peculiar practice of wearing long combs in their hair, they have contrived to render themselves more effeminate in appearance than she intended them to be. Their crouching manners and want of manliness evince most forcibly that they do not apprehend fully, and in all its merits, the doctrine of our Trans-Atlantic brethren, that all men are free and equal.

That key of our power in India, distinction of castes, does not exercise so great an influence over the minds of the Cingalese as it has obtained among the natives of Hindoostan. Four castes, however, exist in Ceylon. Of these, the first in importance is the *Ekshastria Wansé*, or royal caste, which may be said to have altogether disappeared, there being no acknowledged descendant of the regal dynasty. Second only to royalty are the members of the *Brachmina Wansé*, or the Brahmin caste. The cultivators of the soil are included under the general name

of *Goewansé*, and are next in rank to the *Brachmina Wansé*. The hewers of wood and drawers of water, and in short all the operative classes, constitute the *Kshoodra*, or fourth and lowest rank. Each of these castes is split into innumerable subdivisions, a description of which is unnecessary in this general outline. I would, however, make an exception with regard to the unfortunate race of *Rhodias*, who are considered by the Cingalese ineffably vile, and unworthy of the protection of the laws.

The crime, for which these unhappy outcasts were originally placed beyond the pale of society, would not in Old England be considered a very heinous or unpardonable misdemeanour: a lurking affection for the flesh of the animal pronounced sacred by Oriental laws was the primary cause of their downfall. Their numbers have, in some instances, been swelled by other malefactors, but their principal supply of recruits has ever been from the ranks of the beef-eaters. The

royal clemency did occasionally restore some fortunate individuals to their former rank, but these glimpses of favour were few and far between. The bitter cup of degradation was drained to the last dregs by the wretched Rhodia. On the approach of one of the Goewansé caste, he was compelled to prostrate himself, and form a stepping-stone for his lord and master. Nothing, perhaps, can give a better idea of the utter contempt in which the Rhodia caste were held, than the circumstance of the Cingalese objecting to lay hands on some of them whom our Government wished to arrest, but offering to shoot them on the first convenient opportunity.

Notwithstanding their physical and mental sufferings, the food of their choice seems to have, in some measure, repaid them for the sacrifices of which it was the innocent cause. Both the men and women of the Rhodia tribe surpass the general average of Cingalese beauty. The women, in parti-

cular, win the favour of Europeans, both by their good looks and fascinating manners. Shunned and execrated by the vilest of their fellow-countrymen, they avenge themselves in a truly feminine mode, by shewing a marked partiality for the society of the "pale faces."

To the Kshoodra caste also belong the savage Veddahs, a wandering race inhabiting the wild and unfrequented country to the north-eastward of Kandy. A cursory notice of this extraordinary people, who, in the midst of civilization, are still to be found in a state of nature as low as it is possible for humanity to descend, cannot fail to be interesting to those who pursue the first of all studies—the study of mankind; for, in the history of the world there are few, if any, instances of a race of men who, like the Veddahs of Ceylon, have retained all the propensities and characteristics that belong to the lowest grade of savages, in defiance of the halo of civiliza-

tion that on every side surrounds them. The inaccessible nature of their country, covered with dense jungles, and impervious except to the beasts of the forest, and to men resembling them in habits and pursuits, may in some degree account for the utter moral degradation of this singular tribe.

The tract of country stretching from the base of the hills that terminate the range of the Kandian mountains to the eastward, to the commencement of the civilized belt of land that skirts the eastern coast of the island, is solely occupied by Veddahs, who consider it their birth-right and father-land. Their early history is buried in obscurity, and recorded only in absurd and Oriental tales. There can, however, be no doubt as to their being the descendants of the aborigines of the island, who, on the invasion of Ceylon by the Malabars, retired into these "deserts idle," and there found shelter from their powerful invaders. They are divided into two classes, the village and the wild

Veddahs. The former and less interesting class may be said to form a link in the chain that connects their wilder brethren with the Cingalese, whom they resemble in form and features. They live for the most part on the spontaneous productions of the earth, and on the food of such animals as their limited skill in the art of venerie enables them to capture. With this simple diet they unite the fruit of the cocoa-nut tree, which they plant and cultivate. The simplicity of their mode of living seems a practical illustration of the lines,

> "Man wants but little here below,
> Nor wants that little long."

Their dwellings and clothing are on a scale proportioned to the poverty of their diet. The statue of Achilles, in Hyde Park, will afford to the curious the best idea of their costume, which is, however, scarcely so respectable as that of the Grecian hero. On one occasion, this deficiency of attire led to

a rather ludicrous scene in the court of justice at Alipoot, our most advanced station in this neighbourhood.

It appears that some knotty subject had been agitated among the elders of the Veddahs, by whom all questions that can possibly arise in such a primitive state of society are usually decided. In this instance, however, their judgment was at fault, or at all events did not secure the acquiescence that it generally does among this simple people. It was determined, *nem. con.*, to adjourn to the aforesaid district court, and trust to the justice of a British judge. On their arrival at Alipoot, they accordingly ushered themselves, *sans cérémonie*, into the presence. The district judge, unfortunately, happened to be a great observer of the proprieties, and, as soon as he could find words to express his indignation at this flagrant contempt of court, directed the whole of the litigants, young and old, to be summarily ejected, with strong injunctions touching the

necessity of consulting the village *Schneider*. To incur expense for such a trifle was an idea that did not for a moment disturb the mental quiescence of these sylvan denizens; a middle course was, after due deliberation, suggested, and forthwith adopted. The charitable villagers, like good Samaritans, clothed the naked with such articles as were most conveniently procured at the moment, and in a few minutes the Veddahs, headed by their "ancient," re-entered the hall of justice in a variety of rather grotesque costumes. Some were swathed, like Egyptian mummies, in immense rolls of country cloth, which enveloped their entire persons, arms and all, and effectually prevented any further objections on the score of deficiency of dress; others appeared enveloped in blankets, the very sight of which, with the thermometer at 90°, induced the most disagreeable sensations. In short, the uniformity of "nature's dress" was no longer visible, and in lieu thereof, the most variegated crew that can

well be conceived now stood before the lately indignant representative of British justice.

These village Veddahs, although far beneath the civilized Cingalese, rank high in the scale of civilization when compared with those roaming and savage children of the trackless forest, who are also comprised under the general name of Veddah. By way of distinction, these wild animals are called forest Veddahs. They never associate with their brethren of the villages, who regard them with feelings of enmity and disgust. Like the beasts of the forest, they live in pairs, and, except on some extraordinary occasion, never assemble together.

Neither the village nor the forest Veddahs have the slightest idea of a Supreme Being, or of a future existence. The former and superior race believe in the existence of devils, who, in their opinion, are the malevolent agents that cause "the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to." To

these evil demons they occasionally offer some rude tribute, to arrest any sickness or other cause of distress which may afflict them.

The wood-craft of these savages, on which they mainly depend for the support of life, is rude and inefficient in the extreme. The bow is their sole weapon of offence. Their arrows are headed with iron, which they receive from the Cingalese in exchange for the skins of deer and elk. With this feeble instrument of destruction, they wage an incessant war with the elephants that abound in their territories and dispute with these creatures in human form the dominion of their desolate wilds. Even under these unfavourable circumstances, human sagacity prevails over the physical force of the brute. Like the invulnerable Grecian hero, the elephant has a weak point, which nearly coincides with that of the son of Thetis. The arrows of the Veddahs, which rebound from his body as from a wall of adamant,

become formidable weapons when directed at the sole of his foot. In the act of walking, the animal raises his foot in such a manner as to expose the whole of the sole to view; the Veddah, aware of this peculiar action, cautiously follows his victim until he is sufficiently near to discharge with effect an arrow at the vulnerable part. When the wounded foot is again placed on the ground, the arrow of course breaks, leaving the barbed point deeply buried in the flesh. The elephant hardly deigns to notice such a trifling injury when first received, but the pain arising from the inflamed part soon puts him *hors de combat.* His persecutors now approach, and by means of arrows and spears, contrive to despatch the now impotent brute.

Little has hitherto been done towards inducing the Veddahs to become useful members of society. It is to be lamented that more effective steps have not been taken with a view to the accomplishment of so

desirable an object as that of civilizing this degraded, and, as far as the interests of the state are concerned, useless race of men. The fascinations of that high degree of freedom which belongs to the savage state, and cannot co-exist with the pursuits and habits of civilized life, will probably retard the moral subjugation of this interesting people for many years. Until a vast increase shall take place in the thinly scattered population of Ceylon, and cause a partial emigration in the direction of the wastes of the Veddah country, the most sanguine can entertain but faint hopes of any considerable change in the character and habits of these "children of the mist."

CHAPTER VII.

Climate of Kandy—Kandian Pavilion—Military cantonments.—Kandian rebellion—Doombera Plains—Massacre of Major Davie's detachment—Kornegalle Tunnel—Kandian troops—Guerilla warfare suited to the Kandian country—Abattis—Kandian artillery.

From its elevation, Kandy enjoys throughout the year a climate rarely experienced in our Eastern possessions. The annual temperature averages 76°; but at certain seasons, the thermometer seldom ranges above 72°. This circumstance, together with the many other advantages possessed by this favoured spot, renders it the most agreeable place of residence in Ceylon, and, accordingly, the dwellers in the low country generally endeavour to pass a few months of each year in this cool retreat.

It is, however, a question yet mooted by

medical men, whether the climate of this elevated region is, on the whole, more congenial to the European constitution than that of Colombo and other places on the western coast of the island. At these the near proximity of the sea tempers the atmosphere, and induces an equable and scarcely varying temperature; whereas, at Kandy, the diurnal range of the thermometer is excessively great. The burning heats of the day are succeeded by nights which are frequently more chilly than is altogether agreeable to the sensitive frame of an ancient Anglo-Cingalese. This great and sudden change, however refreshing at the moment, cannot be otherwise than injurious, and, by its wearing tendency, has some effect in counteracting the general advantages of the climate.

Be this as it may, Kandy is universally admitted to be the most delightful station in Ceylon. The residents therein are the objects of envy to their less fortunate friends,

whose evil star compels them to remain in a temperature of 90° at Trincomalee, or some other of the many terrestrial pandemoniums that abound in the island. During the hot months, the governor and all the magnates of the land congregate either in Kandy or the lofty plains of Newera Ellia. The residence of the governor at the former place is the most desirable of the different mansions in the island that are appropriated to her Majesty's representative. It was originally intended to follow the design of the Pavilion at Brighton in the construction of this edifice, but the idea, on account of the great expense which it involved, was speedily abandoned. The building, however, glories in the name of, although it mourns its want of similarity to, the regal palace. The Kandian Pavilion is really a splendid mansion, and well adapted to a tropical climate. The main building is cut off from the wings by a long corridor, which serves as a cool lounge during the heat of the day, and adds greatly

to the means of ventilation, the grand desideratum in all Oriental houses. In this part of the Pavilion, the whole of the ground-floor is occupied by one large and well-proportioned state-apartment. The arrangement of the different rooms is admirable, nor do those destined for public reception encroach on the private apartments, so as to deprive them of their fair proportions—an error which seems to obtain in most of the buildings of the Anglo-Indian "quality."

The town of Kandy consists of long straggling ranges of paltry houses, here and there interspersed with a few superior buildings. All the desirable residences are to be found in the suburbs, which extend to a considerable distance on every side, and contain several pretty sites whereon divers bungalows, principally occupied by the military, are erected. The cantonment, if such it can be termed, is as widely dispersed as it is possible to conceive; the barracks of the

different corps composing the garrison being placed at the angles of a nearly equilateral triangle, the sides of which average a mile in length.

Admitting, for the sake of argument, that the bulk of the Kandians are good men and true, the objections to this extreme dispersion of the military force are but little, if at all, diminished thereby. In Ceylon, as in India, our power rests on opinion rather than any particular affection for us or love for our rule. The Kandian chieftains never have shared, and never will share, in the favourable feeling entertained towards us by the lower grades. There is no doubt that many of the Adigars, Dissaves, and other chiefs, who, although subject to the *fiat* of royalty, formerly ruled as lords paramount in their respective provinces, regard our levelling sway with no other feelings but those of hatred and undying enmity. Their influence is, indeed, on the wane, but still considerable, and sufficient, were a fitting

opportunity to present itself, to cause numbers to join them in an attempt to throw off the English yoke. Such an effort would, in all human probability, be utterly vain and impotent, but it should, nevertheless, be regarded as an event which, unlikely though it be, is yet within the bounds of possibility.

A curious and somewhat interesting episode in the recent history of Ceylon would seem to bear out the distrustful view here taken. In 1834, a Cingalese chief informed the then governor, Sir Robert Wilmot Horton, that a plan of a general rebellion was in agitation among several of the most influential Kandian chiefs. Sundry suspicious occurrences corroborated the truth of this statement, and as a matter of precaution, the suspected chiefs were seized and kept in close confinement. This prompt measure had the beneficial effect of nipping in the bud all designs of rebellion, and induced some of the conspirators, who had a due regard for the welfare of "number

one," to disclose the following particulars of the proposed tragedy.

It was arranged that one of the principal chiefs amongst the Kandians should invite the governor to a grand entertainment, which was to have been given at a house in the neighbourhood of Kandy, and to which all the military officers and civilians resident at that station were to have received a general invitation. In the event of its being accepted, it was settled that the wines should be drugged to such a degree as to stupify all who drank thereof. The gentlemen were then to have been knocked on the head, and the ladies reserved to grace the harems of the conspirators. By supplying the troops of the garrison with arrack *ad libitum*, it was confidently hoped that the vinous propensities of the European soldiery would soon put a large proportion of them *hors de combat*, and that the remainder, surprised and without officers, would offer but a faint and ineffectual resistance.

This diabolical plan was matured with a secrecy which, considering the numbers to whom it was necessarily intrusted, is truly surprising. The plot thickened—the fatal hour approached—and the days of the destined victims were nearly numbered, when one, less daring or less blood-thirsty than his fellows, disclosed the fatal secret.

These particulars were elicited and proved on the trial of the chiefs of the embryo rebellion. No moral doubt did or could exist regarding their guilt; but the ingenuity of the counsel employed on the defence, and the notorious leaning of the jury, a majority of whom were natives, in favour of the prisoners, procured a verdict of "not guilty," and added another to the many illustrations of "the glorious uncertainty of the law."

Kandy is not regularly fortified; but a few redoubts garnish the surrounding heights, and would, in case of necessity, serve the purposes of a temporary defence. Field-works have lately been erected on the sum-

mit of an eminence commanding the approaches from Badulla and the south-eastern provinces, the inhabitants of which have the reputation of being the most disaffected in the island.

No station in Ceylon is more fortunate than Kandy in the beauty of the surrounding country. Of the many magnificent views in the island, that of the Doombera Plains, in the immediate vicinity of the station, is the most worthy of the notice of the tourist. From the heights to the eastward of the town, the best view of this sublime landscape may be obtained. The plains comprise a vast extent of beautifully undulating country, dotted here and there with groups of large and majestic trees, the intervals between which are open and entirely free from jungle. The whole bears a striking resemblance to an English park on an immense scale, which would be complete but for the total absence of cultivation and of the dwellings of man. A death-like still-

ness seems to reign over this apparently deserted valley, and contrasts strongly with the busy and animated aspect of the waving corn-fields and happy hamlets that adorn the smiling face of an English landscape.

Through the midst of this magnificent scenery rolls the Mahavilaganga. Being much interrupted with rocks and shoals, no boats appear on its majestic stream, and the lonely river wanders sullenly through a region that seems to sympathize with and share in its solitude. The dark and lofty cone of Hoonnisagiria, which attains an altitude of six thousand feet, raises itself up in the distance, and, supported by a rugged and elevated range of mountains, that fill up the back-ground, lends an additional charm and grandeur to this enchanting scene.

Nearly in the centre of the valley of Doombera may be descried a slight eminence, crowned by a solitary and ancient tree, generally known as "Davie's Tree."

It is thus denominated on account of its vicinity to the site of the massacre of a detachment, under the command of Major Davie, which occurred during the Kandian war of 1803. As the details of this sad event, though universally known in Ceylon, are not familiar to the British public, and as they serve to evince the ferocity and treachery that, in the days of their independence, characterized the Kandians, they deserve a brief and cursory notice.

When the Kandian war of 1803, which Governor North vainly endeavoured to prevent by conciliatory measures, broke out, the British army, under General MacDowal, advanced into the interior, and occupied the capital as a military post. On the approach of the sickly season, it was deemed advisable to withdraw the greater portion of the force employed; and, accordingly, a detachment of only a thousand men, the majority of whom were Malays and Lascars, remained as the garrison of Kandy. Shortly after the

retreat of the main body of the army, the Kandians, aware of the weakness of the garrison, attacked the town of Kandy with overwhelming numbers. The jungle, which at that time hemmed in the place on every side, offered great facilities to the attack, by enabling the assailants to approach unobserved to the skirts of the dense thicket from whence they poured an incessant and wasting fire. After a few hours' resistance, the commandant, Major Davie, agreed to evacuate the place, on condition of being allowed an unmolested retreat, with arms and baggage, to Trincomalee. The Kandians having acceded to this demand, the ill-fated troops, abandoning their sick and wounded to the mercy of the enemy, commenced their retrograde movement. About three miles from Kandy, intersecting the road to Trincomalee, flows the Mahavilaganga, which is at this point a stream of considerable breadth, and when, as at the period in question, swollen with rain, of great depth and rà-

pidity. Major Davie halted for the night on the right bank of this river under the tree which has since borne his name. At day-break he despatched messengers to the chiefs of the Kandian army, which still hung on his rear, with a requisition for boats or rafts, for the purpose of transporting his party over the river in their front. The chiefs, with true Indian cunning, undertook to furnish the boats required; and, lulled by this deceitful promise, the English commander passed the day without making any effort to overcome the obstacle presented to his march.

Time was thus gained for the advance of reinforcements to the enemy, whose numbers now enabled him to dispose his forces round the devoted band in a semicircle, of which the spot of ground occupied by Davie's party was the centre, and the river the diameter. On the second morning of their bivouac, the British detachment found themselves thus enveloped by a perfidious enemy, whose objects were now fully revealed.

Despondency now began to prevail amongst the native troops under Davie, numbers of whom went over to the Kandians, who received them with open arms. By the exertions of some officers, who did not yet despair, rafts were at length made, and it was hoped that, in the obscurity of night, the passage of the river might still be effected. But the ray of hope which thus burst upon the minds of the depressed soldiery was speedily dissipated by an order from Major Davie to surrender to an enemy never known to spare a captive. So well and truly was the merciless character of the Kandians estimated, that two officers, on hearing this fatal mandate, mutually performed the last kind office, and died a Roman death.

Their anticipations were fully realized. The Kandians took the disarmed European soldiers by twos and threes, into a neighbouring ravine, and there massacred them. Only one of the destined victims, a private of

H.M. 19th regiment, escaped; and from him these particulars were chiefly gleaned. He swam across the river, and, although severely wounded, succeeded in making his way to Trincomalee.

More than three hundred European officers and soldiers, including those who were abandoned at Kandy, were thus murdered in cold blood. Of the whole party, Major Davie was the only individual whose life was spared by the captors. This circumstance has led some to suspect him of treachery. It is, however, not probable that he would have willingly resigned the charms of civilized society for the life of a savage, or that the Kandians could have tempted him to incur everlasting infamy by their most specious promises. Incapacity may, with more justice, be laid to Davie's charge. His operations, from the commencement of the attack, indicate weakness and indecision, and his early surrender filled the measure of his disgrace. As if to illustrate the practicability

of a retreat under similar circumstances, a detachment of less than half the numerical force of that under Davie effected their retreat from Kandy in the following year, over the same ground, and in presence of a large Kandian force, which attacked them in front and rear, and harassed their march until they arrived within a few miles of Trincomalee.

When our troops occupied Kandy, in 1815, Davie managed to elude the strict search that was made for him. He had contrived to insinuate himself into the good graces of the Kandian monarch, by adopting the dress, religion, and customs of the natives. He died in 1816. Like the Venetian—

> "Unannealed he passed away,
> Without a hope from mercy's aid,
> To the last a renegade."

On each of the passes by which Kandy is approached, scenery but little inferior to that of the Doombera Plains meets the eye. The road by one of these passes runs through a

tunnel five hundred and forty feet in length, which gave the finishing blow to the ideas previously conceived by the Kandians concerning the duration of their independence. An ancient legend informed them that their country would never be subdued until the invaders bored a hole through one of the mountains that encircle the Kandian capital. This feat having, by the construction of the Kornegalle tunnel, been achieved, they at length believe that it is their *khismet* (destiny) to submit to foreign domination.

The road through the tunnel unites itself, at the foot of the Kandian hills, with the principal road to Colombo. By means of this circuitous route, troops advancing on Kandy would turn the heights near Cadaganava, on which the natives used to place great reliance, as a strong natural position for the defence of their capital.

This, being a warlike chapter, may be appropriately concluded by an account of the mode of warfare usually adopted by the

Kandian militia—for such they were in all but the name. Every male able to endure the fatigues of war was liable to be called on to "do the state some service." Each village furnished its quota, calculated according to the number of men resident therein. The conscripts were expected to appear at the appointed rendezvous, provided with fifteen days' provision, which, to the abstemious native of the East, is not a particularly heavy burden. At the expiration of a fortnight, these warriors were relieved by another batch from the villages, these by a third party, and so on until the campaign terminated.

This mode of recruiting, it may readily be conceived, was not likely to produce good soldiers or energetic operations. There are, however, few countries in the world where the advantages of discipline are of so little avail as in Ceylon—where the rude and undisciplined peasant is so nearly on a level with the trained soldier. The broken and

rugged nature of the ground, the impassable swamps, the impervious character of the jungle that covers the face of the country, all these baffle the operations of regular troops, and reduce a Kandian action to a multitude of single combats.

The wooded country in the interior provinces everywhere offers facilities for the formation of the most simple, but the best of all military obstacles—an abattis. Of this the Kandians constantly availed themselves, and, sheltered among the adjacent thickets, frequently inflicted a severe loss before it could be removed. They were for the most part armed with muskets, which they eagerly purchased during their short intervals of peace with the Dutch. Their artillery consisted of a few gingals, a description of gun capable of throwing a one-pound ball, and mounted on a wooden and extremely rude carriage. These were laid with great care and accuracy, and their first salvo was conse-

quently effective; but the difficulty of firing such an unwieldy machine with precision rendered comparatively harmless the succeeding discharges of these "mortal engines."

CHAPTER VIII.

Newera Ellia—Gampola—Ceylon hotels or rest-houses—Pusilava—Coffee-planting in Ceylon—Shadists and Anti-Shadists—Coffee estates—Supply of labour not equal to the demand—Suggestions thereon.

NEWERA ELLIA, the *station sanitaire* to which the invalid flies in search of that health which he has vainly wooed in the less elevated districts of the island, is a place of such infinite merit as to deserve a full and circumstantial description of its manifold and varied excellencies.

Some dozen years have elapsed since these invaluable plains were brought into notice. Their existence prior to that period was known, but unappreciated, until Sir Edward Barnes, with that energy which always characterized him, decided upon availing himself and the colony of the "goods the gods

provided." With this object in view, that admirable road, to which allusion has been made in a former chapter, was commenced in 1828, and in despite of the many and various obstacles presented by the difficult nature of the mountainous country through which it runs, completed in the course of the following year.

After leaving Kandy *en route* for Newera Ellia, you retrace your steps to the Paradinia Bridge, near which the road branches off from that to Colombo, and follows the course of the valley of the Mahavilaganga. The country continues flat for the first few miles, and nothing of interest occurs until you arrive at the little village of Gampola, where there is a tolerable rest-house, which stands on a rising ground, and commands a view of the distant blue mountains you are about to ascend.

They may manage these things better in India, but in Ceylon the rest-houses are seldom to be depended upon, and the tra-

veller must, if he have a lurking affection for the creature comforts, provide all things needful. Provender for man and beast is sometimes procurable, but it would be the height of folly to trust to such a rare contingency. Rest-houses, as their name imports, are dwellings wherein the wayfaring man may rest from his fatigues, and court the embraces of "Nature's kind restorer." They generally contain a few dirty and rickety chairs and tables, provided by Government; and when one has carefully counted them, and observed that four bare white-washed walls inclose this elegant furniture, nothing remains to be noted or commented upon.

I think it was Dr. Johnson who observed, "Men always meet the most cheerful welcome at an inn." Far be it from me to deny the truth of an aphorism emanating from such grave authority; but, as with all general rules, exception may be taken against this. Had the doctor traversed the

wilds of Ceylon, he would have discovered that the inns, caravansaries, or rest-houses of that island afford a striking contradiction of the trite saying above quoted. No portly Bonifaces there welcome the wearied traveller, who, as he stalks unattended into the mansion, gazes on a "banquet-hall deserted" apparently for ever. "Mine host" is, in all probability, absent, and dreams not of the advent of his guest, who awaits his return in a most unchristianlike mood. When the stray gentleman is caught, matters are scarcely improved; nor does he attempt to apologize for the undeniable deficiencies of his culinary establishment. "There was milk this morning," and "there had been fowls for sale," are the only words of consolation which the hungry *voyageur* is likely to wring out of his dusky landlord.

Notwithstanding these petty *désagrémens*, a person provided with the one thing needful in this sublunary planet, will never starve even in the rest-houses of Ceylon. The

necessaries, if not the luxuries, of life, will at length be forthcoming. Curries, fruit, and eggs, form the usual repast, which, although rather miscellaneous, is, under such circumstances, not to be despised.

The rest-house at Gampola is on the left bank of the Mahavilaganga, which is at this point confined and rapid. It is crossed by means of a tolerable ferry-boat, which does duty for a bridge. The country on the opposite bank now begins gradually to ascend and assume a more wild and romantic aspect. Before reaching the next station, Pusilava, the steep Atabaggè pass must be surmounted. Near the head of this pass stands the Pusilava rest-house, which is nearly one thousand two hundred feet above Kandy, and, consequently, some three thousand above the level of the sea. At this elevation, the most delightful temperature is experienced. Partaking neither of the intense heat of the low country, nor of the bitter keen mountain air of the lofty plains of Newera Ellia, the

climate of Pusilava may be pronounced, *ex cathedrâ*, to be the most salubrious and delightful within the tropics. Invalids, who dread the sudden transition from the sultriness of the atmosphere of the valleys to the extreme chilliness on "the mountain's brow," frequently establish themselves at this halfway house, which enjoys the bracing breezes, without the frosts, of the temperate zones.

In this neighbourhood, some valuable coffee-plantations exist, and it is considered that the temperature of the station is that which is best adapted for the full development and perfection of the coffee-tree. The plantations near Pusilava certainly flourish in great luxuriance; but whether this arises from the favourable nature of the soil, or from the peculiar climate, is a point on which some doubt exists. Ceylon coffee-plantations are, in truth, in their infancy, and a few years must yet elapse before sundry dubious questions in the art of cultivating them shall be satisfactorily solved. On one

subject connected with their culture there is a very material difference of opinion. The question may be thus stated: "Is shade beneficial or injurious to the coffee-tree?" "There's the rub" which has puzzled the island agriculturists, who have, on this knotty point, ranged themselves under the banners of two factions, the "Shadists" and "Anti-Shadists," whose opinions are as opposite as light and darkness. When such great authorities disagree, who shall presume to decide? One may, however, be permitted to draw an inference from a fact. The ranks of the Anti-Shadists are occasionally recruited by "rats" from those of the opposing creed, and, though the Shadists still preserve a bold front, they are slowly but surely dwindling in numbers, in intelligence, in wealth, in all that constitutes a party. Their pertinacity deserved a better fate; but their doom is fixed—*requiescant in pace!*

The culture of coffee, the staple produce of the island, demands the attention even of

a Rambler in Ceylon. Cinnamon was formerly the most important item of the colonial exports, but the demand for this valuable spice is so capricious, that it has completely abandoned the field to its new rival. The quick return which the coffee-planter meets with is an additional inducement to its cultivation. In five years the tree arrives at maturity, and before the expiration of the sixth, the receipts cover the original and current expenditure.

It has been estimated that the expenses attendant on reclaiming lands in Ceylon from a state of nature, and converting them into coffee-plantations, average nearly eight pounds per acre. The lands are sold by the Government at the low price of five shillings the acre; the principal item of the additional cost is incurred in clearing away the jungle, which almost invariably covers the future estates, the extent of which is regulated only by the available capital of the purchaser, and consequently varies considerably.

To those anxious to obtain information regarding Ceylon coffee-plantations, the following estimate of the probable expenditure and receipts on account of an estate of an average size cannot be perused with indifference. It is the result of a careful comparison of the actual outlay and profit on different estates, and, having been framed by men practically acquainted with the subject, may be received with the utmost confidence. In drawing up this estimate, the expenditure has been rather exaggerated, while, on the other hand, the receipts have been calculated on the lowest possible scale. For instance, it will be observed, that the produce of trees six years old is estimated at half-a-pound; now there is every reason to believe that Ceylon trees of that age, like those of Jamaica, will, on an average, yield one pound. It is unnecessary to dwell upon the enormous addition to the credit side of the account that will accrue in the event of this expectation being realized.

ESTIMATED EXPENSES OF ESTABLISHING A COFFEE PLANTATION OF THREE HUNDRED ACRES IN THE ISLAND OF CEYLON FOR FOURTEEN YEARS.

First Year's Outlay.

1. Purchase of land, 300 acres, at 5*s.*	£75	
2. Two superintendents, £150 each per annum...	300	
3. One hundred labourers employed cutting and burning jungle, planting, &c. &c. at 6*d.* per day, or 15*s.* per month, for twelve months...	900	
4. Four overseers, £1 each per month	48	
5. Purchase of tools, consisting of mammoties, catties, felling-axes, spades, rakes, broad axes, &c. &c....	200	
6. Building huts for labourers	50	
7. Two bungalows for superintendents	200	
8. Furniture for ditto	50	
9. Three serviceable horses for mill or other purposes	90	
10. Horsekeeper and fodder for horses	60	
11. Bullock bandies and bullocks	60	
12. Bandy-drivers and fodder for bullocks ...	50	
13. Cost of an elephant	50	
14. Keepers for ditto	18	
15. Sundry petty expenses	50	
		2,201

Second Year's Outlay.

1. Nos. 2, 4, 10, 12, 14, as before, No. 5, £20, No. 15, £20, and other expenses	1,416	
2. Building a store-house	500	
3. Machinery required for three years	300	
		2,216

Third Year's Outlay.

1. Monthly expenditure as second year	1,416	
2. Repairs to bungalows, huts, &c.	30	
		1,446
		£5,863

Fourth Year's Outlay.

1. Monthly expenditure as second year	1,416	
2. Extra labourers for picking and cleaning coffee for four months	90	
3. Repair of tools	30	
	£1,536	
		7,399

Fith Year's Outlay.

1. Monthly expenses	1,416	
2. Extra labourers, picking coffee, &c.	90	
	£1,506	
		8,905

Sixth Year's Outlay.

1. As fifth year	£1,506	
		10,411

Seventh Year's Outlay.

1. Monthly expenses	1,416	
2. Building new huts for labourers	50	
3. Repairing bungalows	50	
4. New store	80	
5. Wear and tear of machinery	100	
6. Casualties, such as death of cattle employed in above line	50	
	£1,746	
		12,157

Eighth Year's Outlay.

1. Monthly expenses	1,506

Ninth Year's Outlay.

1. Ditto	1,506

Tenth Year's Outlay.

1. Ditto	1,506

Eleventh Year's Outlay.

1. Monthly expenses	1,506	
2. New tools	25	
3. Trifling repairs to buildings	20	
		1,551
		£18,226

Twelfth Year's Outlay.

1.	Monthly expenses	1,506

Thirteenth Year's Outlay.

1.	Ditto	1,506

Fourteenth Year's Outlay.

1.	Ditto	1,506
		£22,744
	Expenses incurred in sending the crops to Colombo for exportation, 2,000 bandies at £2 each ...	4,000
	Total expenditure in fourteen years ...	£26,744

PRODUCE.

3rd Year,	300×1,000=300,000, @ ¼lb. each=670 cwt. @ 60s.		...	£2,010
4th Year,	ditto	... 670 cwt.	...	2,010
5th Year,	ditto	½lb. 1,340 cwt.	...	4,020
6th Year,	ditto	... 1,340 cwt.	...	4,020
7th Year,	ditto	... 1,340 cwt.	...	4,020
8th Year,	ditto	... 1,340 cwt.	...	4,020
9th Year,	ditto	... 1,340 cwt.	...	4,020
10th Year,	ditto	... 1,340 cwt.	...	4,020
11th Year,	ditto	¾lb. 2,010 cwt.	...	6,030
12th Year,	ditto	... 2,010 cwt.	...	6,030
13th Year,	ditto	... 2,010 cwt.	...	6,030
14th Year,	ditto	... 2,010 cwt.	...	6,030
				£52,260
	Sale of estate		...	3,000
		Total receipts	...	55,260
		Deduct total expenditure	...	26,744
		Net profit ...	...	£28,516

Considerable sales of Government lands have taken place within the last few years. During the year 1838, more than forty thousand acres were purchased by various speculators. If the progress of cultivation continues to advance at the same rate that it has done for the last five years, an immense alteration will be effected in the heretofore desert wastes of the island, and, as a necessary consequence, in the moral character and intellectual advancement of its inhabitants.

The price of labour has not, as yet, been much affected by the great and unprecedented demand that has been created by the new coffee-plantations; but it is easy to foresee that the increase of the agricultural population will not keep pace with the rapidly multiplying wants of the landed proprietors. The Malthusian system, however well adapted to the great European family, would be greatly misplaced in Ceylon, where the proportion of inhabitants to the square mile is

by no means *quantum suff.* It has been calculated that the island contains twenty-four thousand seven hundred square miles. Assuming the total number of the islanders to be one million, it will appear that the average proportion of population is not more than forty to the square mile. But the great bulk of the people are congregated along the southern and western shores of the island, so that the Kandian provinces, within which nearly the whole of the coffee-plantations are situated, are comparatively deserted. Of the limited number that do inhabit the Kandian district, a very large proportion are employed in the culture of their own fields—an employment which they infinitely prefer to servitude on the coffee estates, even though the latter proceeding would, generally speaking, be more lucrative and less laborious. To supply the demand, a small influx of labourers has already begun to flow into the colony from the Coromandel coast, and more particularly from the fertile and populous

delta of Tanjore. Nostalgia is, however, found to prevail among these imported tillers of the soil, and the result is, that the coffee-planters have conceived a justly-grounded prejudice against the employment of individuals on whose permanent stay so little reliance can be placed.

At present, the evil is of small magnitude, because the demand and supply are nearly balanced; but it needs no ghost to inform us, that when the anticipated preponderance of the former shall occur, the injurious effects that must arise from such an untoward state of things will be both great and manifold. A system of apprenticeship would seem to be that best calculated to arrest the further progress of this political malady. If a certain period of servitude were fixed, during which the Indian labourers should be bound to remain in the employment of the Ceylon planters, the confidence of the latter would be restored without in any degree infringing on the liberty of their temporary bondsmen.

That tyranny and oppression might occasionally result from the adoption of this plan is no doubt within the bounds of possibility; but the abuse of the power that would thus be placed in the hands of the planter might be guarded against by limiting the duration of the apprentice's servitude to the brief period of two or three years. The object is rather to place a sufficient check on the caprice of the apprentice than to insure his protracted stay in the island.

Numerous coffee-plantations are scattered over the country between Kandy and Pusilava, and from thence towards Newera Ellia. The road frequently winds through estates which are, almost without exception, in a high state of cultivation; but a disquisition on their several merits, however interesting to the commercial world, would probably be lightly esteemed by the majority of those for whose edification this work is intended. For further details, the curious reader, who would fain pursue the subject of planting,

picking, and sorting coffee, must, therefore, consult other and more learned pages. The advantages of the small over the large berries—the maximum height of the invaluable tree whereon they grow—the arguments urged by the Shadists and their opponents, the Anti-Shadists—all these, and many other equally interesting topics, must be overlooked, and left to vegetate in the hearts of Ceylon coffee-planters.

CHAPTER IX.

Forest of Pusilava—Valley of Cotamalie—Cataracts of Rambodde—Ceylon Snakes—Ceylonese fable regarding the Cobra-di-Capello and the Tic Polonga—Sanctity of the Cobra, and character—Tic Polonga—The Pimbera, or Rock Snake—Ceylon Leeches.

AFTER passing through Pusilava, the road immediately enters the forest of that name. This extends for several miles, and contains some majestic trees, the appearance of which is not injured by the presence of any unsightly jungle. The term "jungle," as understood in Ceylon, applies to ground covered with thick and nearly impervious underwood. Large trees seldom occur in a jungle of this description, which is, therefore, *per se*, an uninteresting object; but when it clothes a wild and mountainous country, its uniformity does not displease,

because it seems to harmonize with the stern sombre character that belongs to such a landscape. The forest of Pusilava, consisting of detached trees of considerable size, affords a striking contrast to the low jungle which skirts its edges, and there is, perhaps, no part of the Kandian provinces that combines so many charms as that in the vicinity of this picturesque and extensive woodland.

At Hellbodde, the forest terminates, and the magnificent valley of Cotamalie spreads its gently undulating and varied surface before the fascinated traveller. The winding mountains here form a vast basin, in the centre of which the various torrents that descend from them unite into one deep and rapid stream, which, after winding a long and tortuous course, caused by the peculiar and almost chaotic formation of the country that it traverses, ultimately discharges itself into the Mahavilaganga. The road winds round the precipitous slopes of the mountains, and at its salient angles are many points from

whence one may gaze down into the inmost recesses of what may be aptly termed the "Devil's Punch Bowl." Between Pusilava and Rambodde a glimpse of the towering cone of Adam's Peak may be occasionally obtained. Its distance from those villages exceeds forty miles, and its elevation above them is nearly four thousand feet.

The vicinity of Rambodde is announced by the stunning roar of the falls in its neighbourhood, which greatly contribute to complete the effect of the surrounding scenery. This village is situate at the base of the apparently inaccessible heights that girdle the plains of Newera Ellia. From the rest-house the valley of Cotamalie is seen to great advantage, and while the ceaseless yet soothing sound of the cascades, which pour down on every side, affords to the ear that indescribable pleasure which the noise of falling waters rarely fails to produce, the eye is gratified by the surpassing grandeur of their appearance.

These falls vary considerably in their volume of water at different periods of the year. Subject to the same causes as those which so greatly affect the magnitude of rivers in Ceylon, the streams which supply the Rambodde cascades dwindle to comparative insignificance during the fervour of the summer heats; but this temporary diminution is more than compensated for by the magnificent appearance which they assume on the commencement of the rainy season. It is then that their character, which in the hot months approximates to the contemptible, if not to the ludicrous, becomes truly sublime.

Some prefer the chilly temperature of Newera Ellia; others, the mild climate of Kandy; but the vale of Cotamalie, "in whose bosom the bright waters meet," is, in the opinion of many, the most enchanting spot in Serendib's romantic isle. Its sequestered situation and sublime scenery recommend it to the notice of those who have

recently entered into the state yclept "happy." By the margin of the foaming torrents into which the waters, after descending the falls, immediately resolve themselves, may often be descried a youthful couple, who are dreaming away the period allotted to hymeneal bliss, and

> Under the shade of melancholy boughs,
> Lose and neglect the creeping hours of time.

But, alas! no human happiness is without some alloy. Even in this romantic spot, where scenes and sounds combine to induce the unwary to become sentimental, and meditate on things celestial rather than on those which appertain to this nether world, even here, where all proclaims peace and innocence, danger is rife. A rencontre with the tempter of our common mother—in vulgar parlance, a snake—is by no means an uncommon event in the dark glens that environ Rambodde. Such an occurrence has, on more than one occasion, acted as an

unpleasant interruption to the interchange of that "flow of soul," or, as some have termed it, that amatory nonsense, in which brides and bridegrooms are so apt to indulge.

In the absence of any well-accredited fact to gratify the lovers of the marvellous, the following fable, which is implicitly believed by the Cingalese, may serve as a substitute. The natives refer to it as an illustration of the contrast which exists between the dispositions of the cobra-di-capello and the tic polonga, the former being, in their opinion, a benevolent, the latter a malevolent being :—

"In the Isle of Serendib there is a happy valley, which men call the Vale of Cotamalie. It is watered by numerous streams, and its fields produce rice in abundance; but at one season great drought prevails, and the mountain torrents then cease their constant roar, and subside into rivulets or altogether disappear. At this period, when

the rays of the noon-tide sun beat fiercely and hotly on the parched earth, a tic polonga encountered a cobra-di-capello. The polonga had in vain sought to quench his burning thirst, and gazed with envy on the cobra, who had been more successful in his search for the pure beverage. 'Oh, puissant cobra! I perish with thirst; tell me where I may find the stream wherein thou hast revelled.' 'Accursed polonga,' replied the cobra, 'thou cumberest the earth; wherefore should I add to the span of thy vile existence? Lo! near to this flows a mountain-rill, but an only child is disporting herself therein, while her mother watches the offspring of her heart. Wilt thou then swear not to injure the infant, if I impart to thee where thou mayest cool thy parched tongue?' 'I swear by all the gods of Serendib,' rejoined the polonga, 'that I will not harm the infant.' 'Thou seest yonder hamlet; in front of it gushes forth a spring of water, which never dries during the inten-

sity of the summer heats.' The polonga wended his way towards the indicated spot, and there beheld a dark-eyed girl bathing in the midst of the rushing waters. Having quaffed the delicious fluid, he repented him of his oath touching the infant. His evil soul prompted him to kill her, and as she lay beneath the shade of a leafy tamarind tree, he accordingly approached and inflicted a mortal wound. As he retired from his dying victim, he again met the cobra, who, seeing blood on his fangs, and perceiving the cause, thus addressed him: — 'Hast thou forgotten the sacred oath that thou sworest unto me? The blood of the infant cries for revenge, and thou shalt surely die.' He then darted his fangs into the body of the polonga, who instantly expired."

So great is the reverence manifested by the natives towards the cobra-di-capello, that should one be discovered in the innermost *penetralia* of their houses, they care-

fully secure and replace it in the jungle. It is not altogether to the reputation of a merciful disposition that the cobra owes so perfect an immunity from injury. The popular belief is, that this reptile is a supernatural being, who deigns to revisit "the glimpses of the moon" in the incarnation of a snake. Be this as it may, it cannot be denied by the sceptical that the cobra partakes rather of the character of "a spirit of health" than that of "a goblin damned," its harmless disposition being by no means fabulous. Conscious of a giant's strength, it uses its destructive powers with a giant's generosity. Far otherwise does the vindictive and dangerous tic polonga conduct himself. It is never known to spare an enemy, and being the most venomous as well as the most vicious creeping thing in the island, it is justly dreaded by the Cingalese. Most of the casualties arising from the bites of snakes are caused by this species.

The pimbera, or rock-snake, and the carawilla, make up the complement of poisonous reptiles in Ceylon. The first of these is, in point of size, the monarch of the island snakes, being frequently twenty feet and upwards in length. It is, however, but little dreaded, and seems to confine its devastations to the feathered tribe. Of the carawilla little fear is entertained. It rarely exceeds a foot in length, and appears to possess neither the will nor the power to inflict a mortal wound. Even fowls and small birds occasionally recover from the effects of its bite, though this but rarely happens.

Some twenty other varieties of snakes occur in Ceylon, but none of them are in reality venomous, though the natives give most of them credit for being so. Scorpions and centipedes abound, but their bites are never productive of serious ill effects. More troublesome than either of them are the Ceylon leeches, which, by reason of their

extreme activity and great numbers, rarely fail to force themselves on the acquaintance of pedestrians in the island jungles. It is found in the Kandian provinces, beyond which it never ventures, the excessive heat and drought of the districts adjacent to the sea not being congenial to the taste and habits of this annoying animal. Unless the pedestrian in the jungles of Ceylon be duly provided with some sufficient protection for his nether man, he will find that it is physically impossible to keep in check these persevering and active assailants. Nor is any consolation to be derived by reflecting on the medical advantages of losing a little of the circulating fluid. Unlike their brethren famed in the pharmacopœia, these leeches inflict a wound that, unless actively treated, speedily degenerates into a painful and dangerous ulcer. Some instances have occurred in which even loss of life has ensued from the bites of these apparently insignificant animals. Numbers of the troops, both na-

tive and European, who served in the Kandian campaigns, were placed *hors de combat* in this manner, and in many cases it was found necessary to have recourse to amputation.

CHAPTER X.

Pass of Rambodde—Caffre Soldiers—Caffre Women—Their Dances and mode of Courtship—Scenery of Newera Ellia—Pedrotallagalla—Its elevation above the sea—View from its summit—Reflections on the Sublime and Beautiful, and Breakfast.

It is in the pass of Rambodde, which emerges on the plains of Newera Ellia, that the greatest natural obstacles on the line of route between that Alpine station and Kandy were surmounted. The elevation of the plains above Rambodde, from whence the ascent commences, is between three and four thousand feet. Measured in an horizontal plane, the distance between that village and Newera Ellia does not exceed eight miles. The result is, that the greater portion of the road through the pass is on an inclined plane, which ascends one foot in

twelve or thirteen, an inclination which is nearly the same as that which occurs in Napoleon's celebrated military communication over the Simplon. To keep this corkscrewing way in repair, and clear it of the slips of soil which not unfrequently come thundering down, and choke up the narrow thoroughfare, a strong working party of Caffre soldiers are constantly employed on different parts of the pass. These Caffres are found to make better labourers than soldiers. There is something in their character repugnant to the etiquette and strictness of military discipline. They have been gradually exchanged for Malays, who, almost exclusively, compose the present Ceylon Rifle Regiment. Nature appears to have designed the Caffre to be the counterpart of the Malay. The former is social, cheerful, and amiable; the latter cold, stern, and vindictive. The one awakens our sympathies and affections; the other commands our respect, but makes no effort to secure our

regard, for which he apparently entertains a sovereign contempt. Nor are their corporeal characteristics less at variance than their moral attributes. The Malay is active, of a slight yet muscular form, and his every movement bespeaks energy, while in his restless eye and firm lip may be read that daring and enterprising spirit that has ever belonged to the rovers of the Eastern Archipelago. The Caffre, on the contrary, possesses all the characteristics of the Negro. The woolly hair—the blubber lip—the long heel—all these appear in your true Caffre. His eye, though shrewd, is heavy, and its glances evince none of that cold, sardonic spirit that is born with a Malay, "grows with his growth, and strengthens with his strength." The few Caffre soldiers still in Ceylon are solely employed in repairing old, or in making new, roads. The detachment on the Rambodde pass consists of sixty or seventy men. Nearly all of these being married, and, generally speaking, the fathers

of a numerous progeny, their encampment presents an animated spectacle amid the loneliness of the surrounding jungle. A favourable opportunity of studying another, and, to the Anglo-Cingalese, a novel impress of the "human face divine," is thus afforded to the visitor of Rambodde, who, if a disciple of Lavater, or a phrenologist, has here a new field for his philosophical researches.

Without entering into any dissertation touching the charms of Caffre women, it may, perhaps, be permitted to me to record my conviction that, on the surface of the habitable world, more frightful specimens of *le beau sexe* do not exist. It would be an insult to humanity to believe that any creatures yet uglier could "live and have their being." The head of the Gorgon could hardly have united more horrors than are combined in the physiognomy of a Caffre belle.

Although the party that accompanied me were quite unanimous on this point, these

interesting animals were evidently unconscious of their utter want of loveliness; for, on being bribed by copious libations of brandy, for which they shewed an inordinate affection, they readily undertook to favour their visiters with a Caffre dance. The dance somewhat resembled the fandango of Spain; but the resemblance, it must be confessed, was that of a caricature. Two individuals of opposite sexes gradually approach each other with an air of coquetry, making indescribable contortions and grimaces. The female slowly retires from the ardent advances of her lover, who, suiting the action to the word, endeavours to capture the fair fugitive, while he pours forth his tale of love in the most moving tropes that his eloquence can command. "The lady of his love" at length abates somewhat of the air of scorn with which she at first affects to regard her impassioned swain, who, emboldened by this evidence of a favourable impression, and again alarmed at his own

audacity, alternately advances towards and retreats from the object of his adoration. The movements of the lover and the *lovee*, during this scene of courtship, much resemble those of two ill-trained bears, to which animals they, in truth, bear a striking similitude. The lady at length intimates to her adorer that his is not an hopeless love. This *dénouement* is followed by sundry embraces, of rather too vehement a character; after which "the happy pair" vanish from the stage which has witnessed the rise, progress, and termination of this amatory scene, during which, it should be observed, the spectators are in duty bound to keep up a continued howl or yell, by way of encouraging the performers.

The sins that do most easily beset the Caffres are drunkenness and drowsiness—two failings which most effectually prevent them from shining as soldiers.

When they are not drunk they are asleep. In the one case they are sufficiently trouble-

some; in the other, the most innocuous creatures on the face of the earth; but it need not be added that in both they are equally *hors de combat* and non-effective. In their own country, the Caffres have a reputation for activity and energy; be this as it may, expatriation seems to deprive them of whatever portion of those qualities nature may have originally endowed them with.

A ludicrous defence made by a Caffre before a court-martial, held at Kandy in 1838, may serve to illustrate Jack's* opinion of the undue severity of military discipline. Being charged with divers offences and misdemeanours, all of which were fully established, the prisoner was, *selon les règles*, called on for his defence, which, if it failed to carry conviction, had probably some effect in mollifying the judicial sternness of the court then and there assembled. In

* In Ceylon, Caffres are always denominated "Jacks."

this memorable rejoinder, the prisoner, who, no doubt, possessed forensic talents of an high order, endeavoured rather than to deny the crimes with which he stood charged. He complained that those who held dominion over him had but one receipt for all the moral infirmities that ever and anon "overcame him like a summer cloud." That receipt will best be explained in the words with which he concluded his eloquent and energetic oration: "If I ask for my pay, they say, 'Put him in the guard-room.' If I take a little 'rack,* 'Send him to the guard-room.' If I get sleepy, 'To the guard-room.' When I get a little *drunkay*, 'Take him to the guard-house.'"

After passing this Caffre station, the road continues to wind up the tedious and apparently interminable pass. The head of the pass is nearly three miles distant from Newera Ellia, and from thence is obtained the first view of the plains. From this point

* Arrack.

the road sensibly descends, and at length debouches suddenly on the wide and open valley in which the village of Newera Ellia stands. There is nothing particularly fine in this part of the plains, but the scene, from the contrast which it presents to the generality of Oriental landscapes, strikes forcibly on the mind of him who, for the first time, beholds it, and leaves an impression which is not easily effaced from the tablet of memory. The thatched cottages—the chimneys with their respective columns of smoke wreathing upwards—and, above all, the keen blast which you encounter as you leave the cover of the woods and emerge on the open plain—all these are so entirely dissimilar from all one is accustomed to view and experience within the tropics, that the novelty is at first delightful and exhilarating.

This effect is much increased by the appearance of the flowers and plants proper to the colder climes. On every side may be

seen splendid wild rhododendrons, which in this Alpine region seem to rival the best specimens of those nurtured in the valleys of other lands. The violet, the geranium, and the rose, all flourish in perfection in and around the plains. Nor are the less showy, but more valuable, plants of the vegetable kingdom in any degree unappreciated or neglected by the dwellers in these elevated plains, where the fruits and productions of Europe appear commingled with those of Asia. In addition to the vulgar luxuries of potatoes and cabbages, and other culinary articles, the strawberries and gooseberries, which grow in great abundance in the gardens of the European residents, deserve honourable mention.

The plains of Newera Ellia contain about seven square miles. A road circumscribes their entire extent, and forms the fashionable drive, which, there being no rival, it is likely long to remain. The centre of the valley is occupied by rich grass land,

through which a little river slowly meanders. Around are the houses of the European residents, few and far between, and looking sufficiently sombre and melancholy in their solitude. Newera Ellia is, in truth, a new creation, and still in a state of transition from the majesty of "nature unadorned" to the less sublime, yet equally pleasing, charms that belong to cultivation. Some of its panegyrists consider it an embryo Paradise, and invalids, who have benefited by a temporary residence there, are naturally apt to entertain grateful reminiscences of the scene of their convalescence. Nevertheless, it must be confessed that the merit of these plains rests rather on the climate of the favoured region wherein they are located, than on their claims to beauty. An European climate within the tropics is not, however, to be lightly esteemed, and, when weighed in the balance against the petty *désagrémens* of a tame landscape and a thick mist, that, owing to their elevation and the

attraction of the encircling mountains, constantly overhangs the plains, will assuredly not be found wanting.

Newera Ellia is to Ceylon what the Neilgherries and the lower ranges of the snow-capped Himalayas are to the presidencies of Madras and Calcutta. The elevation of Ootacamund, the chief station in the Neilgherries, above the level of the sea, nearly approximates to that of Newera Ellia. There can be little, if any, material difference between the climates of the two stations; but the Anglo-Cingalese have a great advantage over their continental neighbours in the near vicinity of Newera Ellia to the principal stations in the island. By the shortest routes from Madras to Ootacamund, the distance exceeds three hundred and fifty miles. To invalids, the fatigues of such a journey over the burning sands of the Carnatic almost amount to an actual prohibition against undertaking it. From Newera Ellia to the capital of the island,

the distance does not greatly exceed one hundred miles. Nor should the additional facilities of travelling in Ceylon be forgotten, in drawing a comparison which, however indifferent to the strong and robust, is of the utmost importance in estimating the relative merits and advantages of the two invalid stations.

Being designed for the use of less ephemeral wayfarers than those who frequent the ordinary rest-houses on the roads, the accommodations of that at Newera Ellia are much superior to those generally found in these homes for the weary. There are about a dozen rooms, divided into three suites of apartments for the reception of different parties. The windows look out on the plains, and command a bird's-eye view of the principal houses, which are occupied by the commandant of the station, the government agent, and the few military stationed at the place. Behind the house are the sources of the rivulet that wanders

through the plains. In pursuing its headlong course down the sides of the neighbouring mountains, the constant attrition of the stream has worn several natural baths in its rocky bed, the intense frigidity of which operates like a charm on the relaxed nervous systems of the parboiled Colombites.

It was at one period intended to dam up this little river, and, by thus inundating the valley through which it flows, to form a small lake. A narrow gorge, through which the stream makes its egress from the plains, offers every facility for the proposed improvement. Should it be carried into effect, the station will attract as much attention on the score of beauty as it now most deservedly does on account of its salubrity. But, until that metamorphosis shall be accomplished, it will be somewhat difficult to discover loveliness of scenery in a broad flat valley, skirted by a few desolate-looking cottages, which, without any claim to the character of ornamental, have a certain

white-washed aspect that completely banishes all idea of the picturesque.

From the summits of nearly all the heights that encircle the Newera Ellia plains, extensive and magnificent views may be obtained. These heights, when viewed from the valley they surround, do not redeem the otherwise tame features of the landscape. Their outline is, generally speaking, monotonous, and they rather resemble vast protuberances than majestic mountains. Pedrotallagalla, which attains an altitude of eight thousand feet above the sea, and rises immediately over the Newera Ellia rest-house, is particularly characterized by the absence of those undulations and lower features which so greatly add to the beauty of mountain scenery. It has, however, obtained a reputation that rests on its loftiness rather than on its external grandeur. It is believed to be the highest elevation in Ceylon. Adam's Peak was long considered to be so, but late geodesical operations have set

the question at rest by giving the palm to its rival.

It is usual to consider Pedrotallagalla one of the principal "lions" of the plains, and to quit them without climbing its rugged sides would, in the opinion of all good and true Anglo-Cingalese, imply a lamentable lack of energy. The mountain is, however, so frequently encanopied with thick mist, that the majority of those who "seek the bubble reputation" on its lofty brow return sadly disappointed. But as the view which it commands in clear weather is really sublime, few are deterred by the fate of such unfortunate adventurers. The ascent is, in many places, extremely steep, and, on the whole, rather trying to any but accomplished pedestrians. The mountain-path is frequently choked up with the luxuriant jungle that surrounds it, which, unless kept in check by the constant presence of the pruning-hook, would speedily obliterate all traces of it. Several peeps through the

intervals of the jungle at the grand scenery of the surrounding country may be enjoyed before you reach the highest point of the mountain; but when that is attained, the magnificent prospect, which is beheld in every direction, surpasses all description. Immediately at the base of the chain of heights which is crowned by Pedrotallagalla, the plains of Newera Ellia stretch away, as it were, beneath the feet of the spectator. The fine country of Ouva, which is considered the richest province in the island, is seen more in the distance; and behind, in the back-ground, towers Adam's Peak, which is visible in all its glory. In whatever direction the eye wanders, it feasts on the gorgeous handiwork of nature unassisted by art. Traces of the presence of mankind are nowhere distinguishable in the landscape that rewards the exertions of him who scales the steep and rugged sides of Pedrotallagalla. Mountains upon mountains, horrid crags, and

impervious forests, appear to defy the power of man, and give a stern, magnificent, yet withal, a somewhat savage and awe-striking, aspect to the face of the country.

After gazing on this sublime scene for some time, and taking notes as to the bearings of some conspicuous heights, we commenced descending the mountain side —an undertaking which is almost, if not quite, as fatiguing as the ascent. The celebrated definition, "man is a cooking animal," was never more forcibly illustrated than on this occasion. The bitter keenness of the air on the summit of Pedrotallagalla is sensibly felt even by the acclimated dwellers in the plains of Newera Ellia, and produces an appetite which it usually is a matter of some difficulty to allay. "If we have writ our annals true," speculations on the character of the breakfast that awaited our return at the rest-house seemed to occupy the minds of the

less sentimental of my *compagnons de voyage* more than those reflections on the "sublime and beautiful" which the scene we had just beheld was so well calculated to call forth.

CHAPTER XI.

Maturatta District—Horton Plains—Their recent discovery—Chetahs or Ceylon tigers—Road to Badulla—View of Ouva—Wilson Plains—Ceylon Hunting Club—Elephant herds—Mode of tracking them—Maximum height of elephants.

THE plains of Newera Ellia form but a small portion of the long and narrow table-land that extends, in a south-westerly direction, towards the Saffragam district, and is generally known by the name of the Maturatta country. No part of Ceylon is more secluded than this alpine region, inhabited as it is by a race of mountaineers, whose hardy habits and capabilities of enduring intense cold distinguish, and in some degree separate, them from their fellow-countrymen of the plains. Upon the Maturatta district immense forests of valuable trees grow, and

remain untouched save by the decaying fingers of Time. At intervals, wide plains, of similar character to that of Newera Ellia, but of much greater extent, occur to interrupt the uniformities of the wooded landscape. The Horton Plains, so called in honour of the late governor, Sir Robert Wilmot Horton, afford a magnificent specimen of the open and undulating vistas that are embosomed amid the solitude of the majestic and wide-spreading forests which adorn the table-land of Maturatta. They spread over a nearly circular space, the perimeter of which is about twenty-five miles, and being somewhat more elevated than the general level of the adjacent country, experience a proportionate degree of cold.

Some idea of the topographical ignorance of both Europeans and natives regarding this lofty and salubrious district may be formed from the fact of the existence of these beautiful plains being unknown until within the last five years. They were first seen by

Lieutenants Fisher and Watson, of the 58th and Ceylon Rifle regiments, who discerned them from the summit of a distant hill. Having taken the bearings of the spot, they cut their way towards it, through the dense forests that intervened, and were at length rewarded by arriving at by far the most extensive and magnificent plains that have hitherto been discovered in Ceylon.

Elephants, the monarchs of Ceylon forests, are occasionally, but rarely, seen in the Maturatta province. They usually confine their wanderings to the flat country, or to tracts that are not greatly raised above the level of the sea. But the chetahs, or hunting tigers, though found in most parts of the island, seem to enjoy the keenness of the mountain air, and to flourish in a temperature that is shunned by the rest of the animal world. Their audacity reaches its *acmé* in this temperate region, the rustic inhabitants of which often suffer in purse, if not in person, from the effects of their constant depredations.

In Ceylon, this animal seems to supply the place of the formidable Bengal tiger. That tyrant of the Indian jungles is not met with in this island; but chetahs, who may be termed tigers in miniature, are extremely numerous. They commonly measure four feet in extreme length, but seldom attain a greater height than eighteen or twenty inches. The most powerful dogs have no chance with a full-grown chetah, who frequently springs upon them from his concealed lair in the jungle, and immediately destroys them.

From Newera Ellia, the only roads leading to other stations are those to Kandy and Badulla. The latter place is about forty miles distant towards the south-east, and is situate in the province of Ouva, which, though less fortunate in its geographical position than the Saffragam district, is not inferior in natural advantages or in point of scenery to any other in the island. The road connecting Badulla with Newera Ellia

is the only one by which this fine province is traversed. At the point where it begins to descend from the plains of Maturatta to the comparatively low district of Ouva, an extensive and beautiful view of that fine district is commanded. After entering within the limits of Ouva, the road soon degenerates into a narrow and occasionally dangerous pathway, now skirting the faces of precipitous cliffs, and again wandering along the bottom of deep and gloomy ravines.

Mid-way between Badulla and Newera Ellia, a wide and open tract of rich grass-land, named Wilson Plain, in compliment to Lieutenant-General Sir John Wilson, lately commanding the forces in Ceylon, extends its smooth velvet carpet over a softly undulating country. In the centre of the plain stands a bungalow, built by a hunting club, which lived for a brief space amid these romantic scenes, and then expired for want of *matériel* whereon to practise the science

of venerie. For it is a singular fact, that the Kandian provinces, apparently so well calculated for the increase and multiplying of abundance of game of all descriptions, are extremely destitute of every kind, always excepting the lordly elephant. Hares and snipe are tolerably numerous, but wild pigs, deer, and jungle-fowl, a bird bearing some resemblance to a pheasant, are seldom seen, and, by reason of the thick cover in which they are invariably found, still more rarely shot. Florikin and teal, which afford a constant resource to the Anglo-Indian sportsman, are quite unknown in Ceylon, and the only woodcock that, in the memory of man, ever appeared in the island, was shot by Lieutenant Bligh, of H.M. 61st regiment, and is now preserved in the Colombo Museum as an extraordinary curiosity. Elk, which usually lie in the most retired recesses of the forest, afforded the chief source of amusement to the members of the ephemeral Ceylon Hunting Club. They abound in and

around the Wilson Plain; but their extreme timidity, which belies the ferocity of their appearance, renders it difficult to drive them out of the impervious thickets, to which they pertinaciously cling for protection against the arch-enemy of the beasts of the forest. It was, therefore, a rare event to bring them to bay in the open country, and the hounds that came up with them in the jungle usually began, continued, and ended the chace without the aid or presence of the huntsmen, who, much to their mortification, were generally compelled to remain stationary at the edge of the forest, and listen to the music of the baying of the dogs *erectis auribus*.

After traversing the extensive Wilson Plain, the Badulla road again plunges into a succession of cliffs and chasms; but their character now becomes less stern, and gradually changes to the gently-rounded features and level plains of a champaign country. Badulla is by no means an uninteresting spot. The houses stand on the slope of a steep

eminence, and command a pleasing prospect of hill and dale. Immediately behind the town, if a paltry hamlet merits that appellation, the mountain yclept Kammoonakooli lifts its majestic outline and gigantic mass towards heaven, and reaches an altitude of nearly seven thousand feet.

Badulla is garrisoned by a company of the Ceylon Rifles, and is the principal military station in the secluded district of which it is the capital. The country around is particularly fertile, and, being raised three thousand feet above the sea, is extremely well adapted for the culture of coffee, a large quantity of which is grown in its neighbourhood. The district around has always been famed for the multitude of elephants that in numerous herds wander over it and the adjacent province of Bintenne. They chiefly abound in the neighbourhood of Alipoot, the most advanced post in this direction, where there is a small military detachment. It is not unusual to see ten or twenty elephants,

followed by their young, in the same herd. The crashing sound which so many gigantic brutes produce in forcing their way through the long tangled underwood and jungle is often distinctly heard at a considerable distance, in the silence of the night, when the elephants come forth from the cool retreats wherein they have avoided the noontide heats. The cry, or, as it is generally called, the trumpeting of the animal, which is very peculiar and shrill, serves as an accompaniment to the falling of the trees and the snapping of the branches that impede his progress or tempt his somewhat fastidious appetite. These nocturnal sounds cannot be better described than in the words of Southey:—

"Trampling his path through wood and brake,
And canes that crackling fall before his way,
And tassel-grass, whose silvery feathers play,—
O'ertopping the young trees,—
On comes the elephant, to slake
His thirst at noon, in yon pellucid springs.
Lo! from his trunk upturned aloft he flings

> The grateful shower; and now,
> Plucking the broad-leaved bough
> Of yonder plane, with waving motion slow,
> Fanning the languid air,
> He waves it to and fro."*

After heavy rains, the track of these herds is easily detected by the impressions of their feet on the soft clay. Some of the natives evince considerable sagacity in immediately detecting the least vestige of the foot-print of an elephant. From the most trifling marks, they can confidently state the number, and, what appears still more extraordinary, the size, of the elephants composing the herd. The secret of this last discovery consists in the anatomical fact, that twice the circumference of an elephant's foot is exactly equal to his greatest height, measured from the fore-foot to the point that corresponds with the withers of a horse. By long practice, and perfect acquaintance with the formation of the foot of the animal, the most expert native huntsmen can, by closely

* The *Curse of Kehama*.

examining even a small section of the impression that it leaves, calculate his height, and nearly approximate to the truth.

The elephants of Asia are said to be larger and fiercer than those of Africa. Those of Ceylon are undoubtedly equal in size and strength to any on the Indian continent, but I never saw any of these animals that exceeded ten feet in height, nor do I believe that they ever attain in any part of India more considerable dimensions. Even this may be pronounced the extreme maximum, for an elephant eight or nine feet high is by no means a contemptible specimen of his kind.

CHAPTER XII.

Adam's Peak—Tradition concerning Adam—The Kalu Ganga—Scenery around Adam's Peak—Anarajahpoora—Ski Maha Bodi Tree—Its supposed sanctity and eternal duration—Ruins of the Sowamahapaaya—Dagobas—Compared with the Pyramids of Egypt—Decline of Ceylon—Attributable to the ruin of the Roman Empire.

THE conical formation of the mountain known by the name of "Adam's Peak" renders it a remarkable object, which, to be recognized, requires only to be seen. To ships approaching the island from the westward, it forms an important landmark, that, although many miles from the sea-coast, is often seen long before any other land is visible above the horizon. Tradition, which assigns to it the honour of being the spot from whence our first parents were igno-

miniously expelled, gives the peak that undefinable degree of interest, with which we fondly contemplate the scene of "ancient tales and legends old," however unsupported by probability or the credence of mankind. With a brief account of this sacred mountain, for such it is considered by the followers of both Boodhoo and Siva, I propose to conclude my reminiscences of the Kandian provinces.

By the devotees who frequent, and by the curious who visit it, the mountain is usually approached from the side of Colombo. It is situate in the province of Saffragam, one of the finest in the island, and, on account of the facilities of water-communication which it enjoys, one likely to become the most important and valuable. The Kalu Ganga, a river which has its source at the foot of Adam's Peak, and enters the Saffragam district, affords the best line of route to and from that holy hill. It discharges itself into the sea in the neighbourhood of Cal-

tura, a place nearly mid-way between Galle and Colombo. From Caltura, therefore, most tourists take their departure when about to plunge into the recesses of the Saffragam country, which, although possessing advantages superior to those enjoyed by any other province in the island, is but little known and still less frequented by Europeans.

To make way against the stream of the Kalu Ganga, which, like all other rivers in Ceylon, is extremely rapid, is a tedious operation, that would be intolerable to the most enthusiastic traveller, were it not that the grand character of the country through which the river wanders serves to divert his attention from the contemplation of all the ills that are concentrated in the island paddy-boats.

The river is navigable as far as Ratnapoora, a small village at the base of Adam's Peak, which derives its name from the numerous gems and precious stones that are

found in the beds of the tributary streams which here join the Kalu Ganga. Being a central point in Saffragam, Ratnapoora has been selected as a military post, and as the residence of the government agent of that district. A temple, dedicated to Samen, the tutelar deity of the province, is the chief object worthy of attention in the place, and serves as a rendezvous for the pilgrims to the peak, who generally pass the night within its sacred precincts, before attempting to climb the lofty mountain. From this village the road or path, which leads to the summit of Adam's Peak, follows for a short distance the line of the Kalu Ganga, and then suddenly ascends from the banks of that river. At this point, palanquins or other conveyances must be dispensed with, and the remainder of the journey is necessarily performed on foot. Unlike the mountains of the interior, which gradually attain their extreme altitude, Adam's Peak rises precipitately from the Kalu Ganga to an

elevation of seven thousand feet. To reach the celebrated Peak is, therefore, a feat of no ordinary difficulty; and, however the fatigue attendant on the undertaking may affect the devotion of those who visit it from religious motives, there can be no doubt that it acts as an unpleasant sedative on the ardour of the unbelieving but inquisitive Christian.

But all who have stood on that lofty summit, which, towering over all surrounding objects, seems to "dally with the wind and scorn the sun," will readily admit that the toils of the way are more than compensated for by the extensive and beautiful landscape which is on every side seen from Adam's Peak. The view towards the west is that most generally admired. In that direction, the splendid province of Saffragam, with its hills covered with some of the finest timber in the island, and its valleys for the most part in a state of cultivation that forcibly contrasts with the wild character of the

mountains within which they are embosomed, stretches towards the ocean, which is distinctly visible in the far distance. When the first rays of the morning sun bathe this landscape in a flood of light, such as is emitted only from the sun of the tropics, and the nocturnal mist, which usually overhangs the depths of valleys, begins to yield to their cheering influence, the gorgeous magnificence of its appearance at that moment is the theme of universal admiration.

The mountains of the interior, amid which those around Newera Ellia are, by reason of their superior loftiness, most prominent and distinct, afford on the other hand some wild and grand scenery, which is but little inferior to that of the Saffragam province. Adam's Peak is separated from the chain of mountains that intersect the Kandian province by a tract of comparatively low country. Its consequent isolation renders it particularly conspicuous from most of the principal heights in the interior, and it has thus been

of eminent service as a trigonometrical point in the survey of the island that, under the superintendence of Colonel Fraser, is now in progress. The web of triangulation that, under the auspices of the late Colonel Lambton, has been woven over the whole of Southern India, has in no instance been extended to Ceylon, the best maps of which are erroneous in the extreme, and undeserving of the slightest credit. Much of the interior provinces has, however, of late years, been surveyed for civil and military purposes, and there is reason to hope that a map more worthy of the colony will be published in the course of the present year.

The summit of Adam's Peak embraces a flat oblong area of two hundred square yards. Of this space a large portion is occupied by a mass of rock, upon which a gigantic impression of the human footstep is stamped. The impression is slightly, but indelibly, indented on the smooth surface of the rock, and measures nearly five feet and a half in length by

thirty inches in average breadth. Believers and sceptics are indifferently permitted to ascend this rock and examine the footprint; but the *entrée* into a small temple, which is erected upon and adorns this sacred spot, is reserved for the devout disciples of Boodhoo.

Respecting the origin of this sacred footstep, a great variety of opinions exists. The Hindoos, Moors, and Boodhists, all ascribe its sanctity to very different causes. The first of these assert that the Hindoo god, Siva, was pleased to bestow on the island this visible sign of his favour. The Boodhists, on the other hand, hold that Boodhoo was the deity in question. But the theory entertained by the Moors, if not more probable, is undoubtedly more interesting, than those of the rival creeds. The Moorish traditions declare that Serendib was the site of Paradise, from whence our first parents were, for their transgressions, expelled to the neighbouring continent of Hindoostan. From the

summit of the Peak, the first man was, according to this legend, permitted to behold for the last time the happy scene of his nativity and existence, while yet in a state of innocence. The mystery of the footprint is thus easily solved.

The interest that may attach to Adam's Peak is, however, infinitely less than that belonging to Anarajahpoora, the ancient capital of Ceylon. This city, and the populous and cultivated country that once surrounded it, are now transformed into an uninhabited desert. Its ruins are situate about mid-way between the northern extremity of the island and Kandy, from which place it is most easily approached. The investigation of the annals of, and the legends concerning, a place so famous in island story as Anarajahpoora, will naturally lead to the consideration of that highly interesting period of its history,. when Taprobane, as Ceylon was called by the Romans, contributed largely to supply the

demands of the luxury that marked the decline of the "sometime" mistress of the world.

According to the *Maha Wanse*, a work to which reference has already been made in a former chapter, and which is held by the Cingalese to contain the most authentic accounts of their early history, Anarajahpoora is a corruption of Anarudhapura, a word derived from the name of a prince who founded the city. A succession of pious monarchs contributed to the embellishment of a locality, for which Boodhoo was believed to have evinced a decided partiality, from the circumstance of his having been sheltered under the umbrageous trees in its vicinity. To commemorate this happy event, a large tree, called the Ski Maha Bodi, has, in all subsequent ages, been the object of the devotion of the devotees who annually undertake a pilgrimage to the "Holy City." The priests of Boodhoo pretend that the Ski Maha Bodi tree has received from the

grateful deity the boon of immortal youth and of eternal luxuriance. Not doubting but that, for his own especial purposes, Boodhoo has emancipated his favourite tree from the immutable laws which govern the vegetable as well as the animal world, the credulous pilgrims fondly imagine that the leaves they now behold on the Ski Maha Bodi are those which, when he took upon himself the form of man and visited the earth, protected him from the fierce rays of a vertical sun.

One of the principal objects of attraction to the antiquary, who wanders amid the ruins of Anarajahpoora, is the Sowamahapaaya. The ancient documents relating to the city concur in stating that this was formerly a majestic structure of nine stories. Of these, none are now in existence; but sixteen hundred stone pillars, upon which the building was erected, are still in tolerable preservation. This immense number are disposed in a perfect square, the side of which

is about two hundred feet in length. Along each side, at nearly equal distances, forty pillars are ranged. The interval between the rows varies from two to three feet, and the square of the pillars, which, with few exceptions, are uniform in size and height, is two feet.

Around the Sowamahapaaya, which was probably a temple dedicated to the worship of Boodhoo, are six Dagobas, or immense solid domes, the altitude of which is equal to their greatest diameter. They are for the most part surmounted by spiral cones, that in some measure relieve the vastness and massiveness of their gigantic proportions. Like the Pyramids of Egypt, they were designed to commemorate the reign of the monarch to whose honour they were raised. In either case, the simplicity and solidity of the construction have defied the ravages of time, and insured its permanence. But the handiwork of the ignorant labourers of Ceylon, though it may rival and even surpass the

massive greatness, wants the elegance and grandeur, that belongs to the more majestic productions of the Egyptian architects. The Dagobas have a ponderous and ignoble appearance; their magnitude is, however, almost unparalleled, and elicits the admiration or the contempt of the European pilgrim, who may either applaud the perseverance or ridicule the injudicious taste of the ancient islanders. The solid contents of the largest of them have been estimated to exceed four hundred and fifty thousand cubic yards; its greatest diameter and altitude are equal, and measure two hundred and seventy feet.

The extent of Anarajahpoora can still be faintly traced. Its perimeter is believed to have exceeded sixty miles, and the ancient walls that encircled the city, and are in some places visible, give some probability to this conjecture. Nearly in the centre of the space formerly occupied by the city, the present mean village, which still retains

the name of Anarajahpoora, remains to mark the site of the fallen capital.

During the last ten centuries, Anarajahpoora has been neglected by the monarchs who have successively ruled the destinies of Ceylon. The central position and numerous advantages enjoyed by Kandy would seem to have attracted their attention, and induced them to abandon the unhealthy site of the former seat of government; but, prior to the desertion of the ancient capital, Ceylon attained the highest degree of prosperity which it has, either in former or later ages, experienced. From its discovery in the reign of the first Claudius, it rapidly rose to commercial importance, to which its geographical position, centrically situated with regard to the eastern confines of the Roman empire and the more remote India, mainly contributed. The merchants from China and the Eastern Archipelago awaited at Ceylon, as a mid-way station, the periodical arrival of the Roman fleets, which, taking

advantage of the south-west monsoon, usually accomplished the voyage from the Red Sea to the coast of Taprobane in six weeks. The silks of China, the precious stones of Ceylon, and the rich spices and aromatics of India, were the articles of trade principally sought for by the Roman navigators. In lieu of these trifling but costly objects of luxury, the Romans were unable to barter the manufactures of Europe, and were thus reduced to the necessity of exchanging their silver for the productions of the Eastern world.*

It was estimated that eight hundred thousand pounds sterling were thus annually expended. Of this sum, which must have appeared immense to the Indian merchants of that age, the capital of Ceylon largely participated. There is good reason to believe that the whole of the extensive public buildings and vast Dagobas which adorned, and of which the ruins still indicate the

* Gibbon's Roman Empire.

position of, Anarajahpoora, were designed and erected during this era of opulence and national prosperity.

It appears that the Kandian provinces were not, at this remote period, subject to the rule of the sovereign of the sea-board provinces. The Kandian king "possessed the mountains, the elephants, and the luminous carbuncle," while the rival monarch "enjoyed the more solid riches of domestic industry, foreign trade, and the capacious harbour of Trinquemale, which received and dismissed the fleets of the East and West."* With the decay of the Roman empire, the lucrative trade, to which the historian here alludes, gradually declined. The profitable traffic was at length monopolized by the Persian navigators. The subjects of the great king sailed from the Persian Gulf, along the western shores of Hindoostan, to the coast of Ceylon. But, in the dark ages that succeeded the ruin of the Roman

* Gibbon.

world, the productions and manufactures of the East, which consisted of the luxuries rather than the necessaries of life, sunk in the public estimation, and ultimately became so little esteemed, that the Oriental trade, which at one time threatened to exhaust the wealth of the empire, dwindled into obscurity and utter insignificance.

From being the chief emporium of commerce in the East, Taprobane again merged into the barbarism from which the influx of the polite subjects of Rome and Persia had in some degree raised her. At this period, the usual concomitants of national poverty and distress began to appear. Domestic tumults and intestine wars succeeded to the long interval of calm that had characterized what may be termed the golden age of Ceylon. Famine and the sword rapidly thinned the superabundant population, and reduced the island to the degenerate state in which it was found by the Portuguese of the sixteenth century.

CHAPTER XIII.

Summary of Ceylon history—Natural advantages of the island, and moderate temperature—Principal rivers in Ceylon—Want of roads—System of Rajah Carrier—Its advantages and disadvantages—Cinnamon gardens—Revision of export duties—The advantages of free trade illustrated—Concluding observations.

From the interesting records that tell of the former greatness of Taprobane, we learn that the island first rose from its pristine obscurity in the first century of the Christian era. Before that period, an host of kings serve but as landmarks to guide us through the "dim obscure" which overhangs the wilderness of incredible legends and absurd fictions that make up the history of their ignoble lives and inglorious reigns. On the discovery of the island by the Romans, in the reign of the first Claudius, the

influence of trade, the possession of wealth, and the constant presence of the Roman and Persian merchants, combined to produce the beneficial effect of elevating its inhabitants in the scale of civilization. This state of commercial prosperity and intellectual advancement may be said to have, without any interval, continued for five hundred years. The causes that operated to overthrow this temporary political elevation have already been shewn, and the dark interval of ten centuries which followed is hardly worthy of mention. Of the Portuguese and Dutch colonists, enough has been said. The state and prospects of the island at the present time only remain to be commented upon.

There are few places in British India so highly favoured by nature as Ceylon. At the same time it must be confessed that, of the immense territories subject to our rule in the East, there are none, the commercial and agricultural advantages of which have

been less developed by the labours of man than those of that island. The principal cause of this exists in the difficult nature of the country, so opposed to the character of the level and open plains of Bengal and of the Carnatic. The want of population, which effectually checks the increase of cultivation, may perhaps be ranked as the second, and the rustic habits and few wants of the agricultural peasantry as the third, of the causes that have chiefly tended to create this infelicitous effect.

The geographical position of Ceylon is eminently favourable to commercial prosperity. It also enjoys the great advantage of having its most fertile provinces in the near vicinity of the sea—an advantage that can only be fully appreciated by the dwellers in the East, where the expenses of land-carriage often amount to treble the prime cost of the articles of merchandize. A great portion of the island consists of virgin soil, the rich quality of which is sufficiently at-

tested by the luxuriant vegetation that everywhere meets the eye. The visiter from the arid plains of the neighbouring continent never fails to be forcibly struck with the pleasing contrast that the beautifully verdant appearance of the island affords to the stunted vegetation and withered aspect of an Indian landscape.

From its insulated position, and consequent exposure to the violence of the alternate monsoons, the temperature of Ceylon is extremely moderate when compared with the intonse heat of India. The extensive forests that conceal the face of the country, by excluding the rays of the sun from the surface of the earth, greatly tend to moderate the intensity of the heat which, from the sixth to the tenth parallel of north latitude, might, *à priori*, be presumed to exist. On the western shores of the island, the annual temperature has been estimated at 80°, and the extreme range of the thermometer from 75° to 85°. The near proximity of the Kan-

dian mountains, by attracting constant and copious showers of rain, and thus producing a perpetual redundancy of moisture, mainly contributes to create the extremely mild and equable climate that so eminently marks the favoured districts around Colombo and Galle.

The island may be said to consist of two distinct divisions of territory, the line of demarkation between which may be drawn from Colombo to Kandy, and from thence through Badulla to Hambentotte on the south-eastern coast. In the southern of the two districts that are thus formed are comprised the whole of the Kandian highlands, the rich provinces of Colombo and Galle, and the sea-board connecting those places, and extending towards Hambentotte. Towards the north, all is flat, barren, and unprofitable. To this general observation the district of Jaffna, however, forms a solitary and honourable exception. But the whole of the inland territory, stretching from the left

bank of the Mahavilaganga to the peninsula of Jaffnapatam, may safely be included in this sweeping condemnation. Only the ruins of Anarajahpoora remain to tell of the former prosperity of this extensive tract of country, which is now as unpeopled and silent as that ancient capital.

Anarajahpoora does not appear to have possessed any peculiar advantages for the site of a populous city. Its centric position between the ports of the western coast and that of Trincomalee would seem to have been its sole recommendation, as far as its own intrinsic merits were concerned. Its selection as the capital was doubtless owing to the supposed predilection of Boodhoo for this his favourite haunt. The country around is poor, and no large river or other natural advantage compensates for the inferiority of the soil. Nature has evidently lavished her treasures on the southern districts, to the total exclusion of the northern. It is, therefore, in the south of Ceylon, that

the hopes of the agricultural and commercial speculators, who are now beginning to turn their attention to that long-neglected island, are chiefly concentrated. Of this land of promise, a brief description, embodying in an abstract form those details concerning it that have already been touched upon in the former chapters, may, perhaps, be necessary to refresh the memory of the reader.

The principal, and indeed the only rivers of any magnitude in the island, water this part of it. The "Great River," which flows near to, and encircles, Kandy, is the least important of them, on account of the shoals and rapids that are interspersed throughout its course. After passing Kandy, in the neighbourhood of Matelé, it rushes down a descent of more than one thousand feet, and pursues a devious and almost unknown course through the wastes of Bintenne and of the Veddah country, until it falls into the sea in the vicinity of Trincomalee.

Of the Kalu Ganga, or the "Black River," by means of which the resources of the rich province of Saffragam are partially developed, mention has already been made. Its stream is rapid, but deep; and there is no doubt but that its importance will gradually increase in proportion to the growing improvement of the fertile province that it traverses. At its mouth this river is of considerable breadth, but, unfortunately, there exists a sandy bed, which materially impedes its free communication with the sea.

The Kelany Ganga rivals the "Black River." It is navigable for sixty or seventy miles from its mouth, which is in the suburbs of Colombo.* It penetrates a difficult and thickly wooded district, which is only par-

* A bridge of boats has been thrown over this river near Colombo. Its breadth at this point is about two hundred yards, and its velocity from two to three miles an hour. The boats are moored head and stern, and at certain hours of the day two of those in the centre are withdrawn, for the purpose of allowing the country craft to pass.

tially under cultivation. Much of it has, however, of late years been surveyed and purchased, and a gradual change is being effected in the face of this part of the island.

There is but one other stream dignified by the appellation of "ganga" or river. A multitude of "oyae," or small rivers, together with some deep bays, that occur on the western coast, and form indents nearly parallel to the line of the sea coast, make up the sum of the means of water-communication. All these streams have the great disadvantage, arising from the mountainous character of the country around their sources, of being extremely rapid. This, however, is of less importance in Ceylon than it would prove in countries less covered with forests. The natives usually form large rafts with the majestic trees that overhang the banks of these rivers, and after floating themselves and the produce of their farms down to the coast upon this simple construction, dispose

of the timber composing their temporary vessels.

Roads, which have been truly said to be the best tests of the progress of civilization, are much wanting in every part of Ceylon. The expense which they involve, when they run through the wild and almost impervious tracts of country that constitute the greater part of that half-savage island, is quite incredible. In the populous districts of India, where the ground is level, and free from marshes and thick jungle, the construction of a road is sufficiently easy of execution; but when forests are to be felled, and the ground is to be cleared of the roots of trees and other obstacles, the difficulties of the undertaking increase *ad infinitum*. It must also be borne in mind, that all the supplies, tools, and various articles necessary in road-making, are, in the majority of the cases which occur in Ceylon, brought, at a great expense, from a considerable distance.

Under these circumstances, the colonial Government is necessarily chary in granting the sums demanded for the execution of various projects of this nature. The road from Kandy to Trincomalee is a good instance of the reluctance with which they furnish the supplies that, as in the case in question, are often urgently required. This road, although commenced about eight years ago, may still be considered in a state of infancy. The slow progress of the work is entirely owing to the want of funds, for it is admitted on all hands that a free communication between the places it is intended to unite, whether regarded in a military or political point of view, would be highly advantageous. A great deal of time, of money, and of life has been wasted upon this apparently Herculean undertaking, and the result has hitherto been—nothing.

It is, however, due to the Ceylon Government to observe, that in consequence of the

repeal of the law of "Rajah Carrier," or compulsory labour, their means of carrying into execution their plans of improvement are considerably diminished. This iniquitous law was introduced by the Dutch, who have ever been severe task-masters in their colonial empire. It remained in force under the British Government until 1832, when a board of commissioners, who at that time made an official report upon the island, recommended and effected its abolition. How, under the beneficent rule of Britain, it was so long permitted to continue in operation, is an enigma that can only be solved by assuming the ignorance of the home authorities with regard to this crying evil. The nature of the Rajah Carrier, reminding us as it does of the feudal times, when vassal and slave were nearly synonymous terms, requires a brief exposition.

By the Dutch law of "Rajah Carrier," which is now so happily repealed, every peasant capable of performing labour was

liable to be called upon to work, for an indefinite period, on the public buildings, highways, and on the fortifications. Every village, according to the number of its inhabitants, was bound to furnish, at the requisition of the government agent, a certain proportion of labourers for the public service. The headmen of each district were held responsible for the due appearance of its quota, and the notorious partiality of these native chiefs had the effect of rendering still more intolerable the odious Rajah Carrier.

Infinitely degrading as slavery, even in its mildest forms, is to human nature, its actual miseries have, perhaps, in some respects been exaggerated. The slave-holder has an interest in the preservation and well-being of his property, which, in the absence of better motives, affords some protection to the bondsmen against the dictates of avarice and cruelty. But, in this particular, the victim of the law of Rajah Carrier was more

unfortunate and more worthy of commiseration than the meanest slave. He was mocked with the title of freeman, and, as such, his life or death was a matter of total indifference to the agents of the Dutch Government. Dragged from their homes to toil in a service for which they received no sort of remuneration, the wretched Cingalese in many instances failed, from actual inanition, and died at the feet of their Christian task-masters.

The effects of this abominable system were indeed mollified when the milder sway of the British was substituted for the tyrannical rule of the Dutch; but the practice, in a modified form, still existed until within the last few years. Although the enormities which were perpetrated under, and disgraced, the Dutch regime, were in a great measure abated by their successors in the colonial government, the operation of this baneful law was still in the highest degree injurious. It rendered the labours of the peasant of no

avail, for, by forcing him to quit his farm at a critical moment, his hopes were often nipped in the bud, and promising crops irremediably destroyed. It created an enduring irritation and a want of confidence amongst the governed towards their governors. In a word, its abolition is the greatest boon that has been conferred on the islanders since their subjection to a foreign yoke.

As in the generality of cases, a certain degree of good arose even from the evil system here detailed. By its aid, the Dutch were enabled to construct many useful public works, and to effect great improvements in the face of the country. Had it not been in force during the period of his government, Sir Edward Barnes would in all probability have failed in the execution of many of the projects that he designed and accomplished. The hands of the present government are comparatively paralyzed by the want of the funds by which only the labour of the natives can now be obtained. In thus alluding to

the partial advantages that did undoubtedly arise from the existence of the arbitrary "Rajah Carrier," it is by no means intended to imply that they were any adequate compensation for the sufferings and distress which it caused, but merely to shew the limited resources of the existing colonial administration, as compared with those of former times.

Having thus described the means of land and water communication in the southern districts of the island, their produce and agricultural capabilities remain to be considered. Cinnamon, the high export duties on which form a very important item in the colonial revenue, grows only in this part of Ceylon. The principal gardens are confined to the district of Colombo. This fragrant plant appears to love a poor sandy soil; that in these gardens consisting almost entirely of white siliceous sand. The equable temperature of Colombo, and the low sheltered position of the country imme-

diately around it, have, with some appearance of probability, been also assigned as the causes of the flourishing condition of the cinnamon plantations in its neighbourhood. Under the Dutch, these and all other plantations in the island were monopolized by the government. In accordance with the more enlightened spirit of the present day, the trade is now thrown open to the public, but the high duties levied on this article of luxury deter speculators from purchasing the gardens.

Ceylon affords a striking instance of the triumph of free principles in commerce. Until within the last few years nearly every important article of produce was subject to almost prohibitory duties. During the government of Sir Robert Horton, this unenlightened system was suppressed, and in its place were substituted tariff duties founded on the more enlarged views and commercial principles of the present day. The result has even surpassed the anticipations of the

most sanguine; and from the day on which the principles of free trade were applied to the colony, the prosperity of Ceylon may henceforward be dated.

One great and unfortunate exception has, however, been made in the application of the universally just principles of freedom in commercial intercourse. Cinnamon, formerly the staple product of the island, and that for which it was chiefly famed, is now lying under the incubus of the enormous export duty of one hundred per cent. Thus, while the export of coffee, sugar, and cocoa-nut oil is rapidly increasing under the beneficial influence of these fiscal alterations which have been mentioned, the demand for cinnamon, fettered as it is with restrictive duties, has rather diminished than increased, and the trade in this spice will continue to decay and languish until a material change is effected in those absurd and anomalous duties by which its energies have of late been cramped and subdued.

The sea-board connecting Galle and Colombo is a flat belt of land, compressed between the foot of the Kandian mountains and the ocean. The cocoa-nut tree, which may be ranked among the staple productions of the island, arrives at its greatest perfection in this part of the coast. No part of India is more productive of this invaluable species of palm than Ceylon, which exports great quantities of cocoa-nuts and arrack to the Malabar and Coromandel coasts. It is observable that this tree never flourishes so well as in the near vicinity of the sea-shore, the sandy soil and peculiar atmosphere of which may, in a great degree, produce this effect.

Most of the rice grown in the island is cultivated here, the level surface of the country enabling the natives to lay it under water without being under the necessity of resorting to the tedious operation of forming a succession of steps, as practised by the Kandians. The supply of rice has, however,

at no period been sufficient to meet the demands of the population, who are for the most part furnished from the ports of Cochin and Quilon, on the Malabar coast, with what may justly be termed the staff of life in the Eastern world.

Galle may be designated the commercial port of the sea-board, as Colombo is of the interior, districts. Some highly valuable lands are situated in its vicinity, and its superior harbour, geographical position, and intelligent inhabitants, will eventually render this sea-port a rival to the present capital. Projecting into the Indian Ocean, mid-way between Calcutta and Bombay, it will undoubtedly become the principal steam depôt in the Eastern seas, when they shall be ploughed by the omnipotent agency of that infant Hercules.

In a work not professing to treat on commercial subjects, the pages that have already been devoted to the coffee plantations may by some be considered superfluous, or, at all

events, misplaced. Let it, therefore, suffice to observe, that, with a few exceptions, which occur in the neighbourhood of Galle, all the coffee estates are situated within the Kandian highlands. That beautiful and rich tract of country, if its resources be duly developed by the introduction of a well-connected system of roads, those arteries through which the life-blood of agriculture flows, will, it may be confidently predicted, raise Taprobane, like a phœnix from its ashes, and render Ceylon the Jamaica of the East.

It is, indeed, evident that the great natural resources of the island will be only partially brought to light until a considerable improvement in its internal communications takes place. Its impracticable surface presents such insuperable obstacles to the transport of agricultural produce as to deter speculators from purchasing land except in the close proximity of a road. The pitiful economy, which compels the colonial government to confine their designs of improvement

to the few roads already in existence, is universally condemned by all classes of society in Ceylon. The check thus imposed on local improvements is forcibly contrasted with the liberal system that obtains in the neighbouring presidency of Madras, where the expense attendant on the construction of works of acknowledged public utility is rarely, if ever, suffered to interfere with their execution.

CHAPTER XIV.

Colonial Government—Executive and Legislative Councils—Civil Service of Ceylon—Its defects—Supreme Court—Clerical establishments—Ceylon missionaries—The Island Press—Troops in Ceylon—Their stations and numerical force—Ceylon Rifle Regiment—Contrast between the Anglo-Indians and the Anglo-Cingalese—Attributable to various causes—Departure from Ceylon.

THE government of Ceylon is actually concentrated in the person of the governor, but ostensibly conducted by two councils, denominated the executive and legislative; the former is composed of the officer commanding the troops in the island, the colonial secretary, the Queen's advocate, and the agent for the Kandian, or, in official parlance, the Central Provinces. These officials are, by a legal fiction, supposed to advise and assist the governor, who is their per-

petual president. In the event of his demise or absence from the island, the officer commanding the troops, as senior member of the Executive Council, assumes temporarily the office of governor.

The Legislative Council comprehends the members of the executive, together with the chief justice, and some few other individuals, European and native. Every colonial ordinance is submitted to their approval before it becomes the law of the land, but in cases of emergency, the governor is empowered to act without their acquiescence in the measures he may propose. A singular anomaly exists in the composition of this council; the chief justice, who has no seat in "the other house," takes, in this subordinate assembly, precedence of the officer commanding the troops, on the principle, it is presumed, of "*Cedant arma togæ.*"

The House of Assembly, wherein the councils hold their occasional sittings, is a large unfinished building, and there is an

appearance of desolation about it that seems to be in keeping with the trifling political estimation in which these bodies are held. They are rarely convened, and their deliberations do not greatly affect the will and pleasure of the governor. In truth, the duties of these functionaries are of the most limited description, for the details connected with the actual control and civil management of the various districts are conducted by their respective government agents, who report direct to the governor and colonial secretary.

There is a wide difference between the civil service of Ceylon and that of India, in the qualifications that are required, in the duties that they perform, and lastly, but perhaps not least, in the amount of the emoluments received by them. With regard to qualifications, the candidates for the civil service in Ceylon undergo no examination whatever, but receive their appointments from the secretary for the colonies

without reference to the previous course of their studies or to their general abilities for the due performance of the important duties that are assigned to them. The many advantages of this system of colonial patronage are so self-evident, as to need no demonstration.

In Ceylon, as in India, the duties of the civil servants are divided into those appertaining to the administration of justice, and those which are connected with the collection of revenue and the government of districts. At first sight, it would seem to the undiscerning eye that there is a wide dissimilarity between a judge and a government agent, considered in their official capacities. The study of Blackstone would, it might be imagined, be equally dry and unprofitable to the collector of revenue, whose intuitive knowledge of his profession might, on the other hand, be supposed susceptible of enlargement by a perusal of the works of M'Culloch. But these ideas, which so

readily present themselves to a novice in Cingalese diplomacy, do not obtain in Ceylon, where the members of the judicial and revenue establishments exchange their respective duties with a happy facility, arising from a modest consciousness of their inherent talents for the sciences of jurisprudence and political economy.

These palpable defects in the civil service require no comment. The indiscriminate and partial selection of candidates, and the amalgamation of duties that are in their nature distinct, are evils in the system, the existence of which, I am persuaded, the majority even of Ceylon civilians will candidly admit. Those who may attempt to defend them will, at all events, subscribe to the truth of the assertion, that their reduced incomes, as established of late years, are the chief impediment to any material improvement in the constitution of the body of which they are members. Within the last few years, considerable reductions in their

pecuniary allowances have been made. The service, according to the new *régime*, is split into three grades, the members of the highest of which do not receive a greater income than £750. The inadequacy of this sum, so paltry when compared with the great emoluments of the civil servants of the East-India Company, is not even compensated for by a retiring pension.

The new regulations, curtailing the pay and allowances of the civil service, have but recently come into operation, and their injurious tendency has, as yet, hardly been felt. But it may, without presumption, be assumed that those who accept such hard terms as those now offered to Ceylon civilians will, in the generality of instances, be inferior in information and abilities to their predecessors, who, notwithstanding the favour and affection shewn in nominating them, often made up by their general acquirements for the want of those proper to the duties connected with their appointments.

All criminal cases of so serious a nature as to be excluded from the limited jurisdiction of the district judges are referred to the sessions of the Supreme Court. Appeals from the sentences of the subordinate courts are also heard and finally determined at the sessions, which are held twice a year by the members of this higher tribunal, which consists of a chief justice and two puisne judges, who are appointed to their offices by virtue of warrants under the sign manual. The governor has, however, the power of provisionally appointing a chief justice or puisne judge, in case of death or resignation, and is even authorized to suspend them, on proof of misconduct or incapacity, reporting such suspension to the secretary for the colonies.

The clerical establishment of Ceylon consists of an archdeacon and five colonial chaplains. The archdeacon and two of the chaplains permanently reside at Colombo; the remaining three are stationed at Trinco-

malee, Kandy, and Galle. At the two former of these places there is no church, and the buildings in which divine service is performed are not sufficiently capacious for the reception of the congregations. At Kandy, the pulpit is alternately occupied by the clergyman and the district judge. It has long been in contemplation to erect more suitable places of worship, but up to the present time no effective steps have been taken for the accomplishment of so desirable an object. Nor is this "untoward" state of things likely to be remedied, as long as the colonial government are embarrassed by the want of funds.

If the ministers of the Established Church in Ceylon are rather few in number, there is no lack, but, on the contrary, a superabundance of missionaries, principally of the Wesleyan persuasion. Their chief establishment is at Cotta, a small village within a few miles of Colombo. At this place, the centre of the most salubrious and favoured district

in the island, their annual meetings are held, and all business connected with the establishment is transacted. That their labours are in many instances productive of good cannot be denied; but it is equally certain that their exertions and privations are greatly exaggerated. Their religious zeal seems directed to the inculcation of their own peculiar tenets, rather than to the general diffusion of the light of Christian knowledge. Instead of constantly visiting and residing at the various out-stations, where the bulk of the uninformed population dwell, they confine their wanderings within the limits of the most desirable places of residence in the island. To these general observations there are, of course, many honourable exceptions. It would be unjust to overlook the merits of the Ceylon American mission, which has been established in the province of Jaffna, and ever been prominent for its indefatigable yet unobtrusive efforts in the cause of religion.

The island press is proportioned to the dimensions of the literary world in Ceylon. There are two newspapers, entitled the *Ceylon Herald* and *Colombo Observer*, the former of which professes ultra Tory, and the latter extreme Radical principles. The one usually undertakes the arduous task of defending all the measures, good, bad, and indifferent, of the governor of the day; the other, that of attacking them. The war of words too frequently degenerates into personal abuse, the natural result of the close compression of such rival spirits in the confined area contained within the walls of the fort of Colombo. Of these papers, one, at least, is conducted with much ability, and its editor, even when in error, generally contrives to overthrow the logical deductions of his opponent, and to make the worse appear the better cause.

Some attempts have been made to establish a colonial magazine, but this production, though frequently in embryo, has never ar-

rived at maturity. A Ceylon almanac is published annually, and often contains some interesting local information. The whole of the appendix at the end of this chapter has been extracted from its pages.

Of the society in Ceylon, as in most of our colonies, the military form a large majority. The usual establishment in the island has, of late years, consisted of the service companies of four British infantry regiments, the Ceylon Rifle Corps, and two companies of the Royal Artillery. The whole force may amount to four thousand men, one-half of whom are concentrated in and around Colombo. The Ceylon Rifle Regiment is much scattered over the island at the various out-stations, some of which have been found, by sad experience, highly inimical to the constitution of Europeans. This corps, which is now almost entirely recruited by Malays, and may without flattery be compared with the finest regiment of sepoys, is entitled to more than a passing notice.

The present regiment are the relic of four battalions that flourished in the days of the last monarch of the Kandian dynasty. After the capture of that tyrant, the rebellion, which almost immediately ensued, kept them in active employment, and postponed the evil day of disbandment. That calamitous event at length occurred in the year of Grace, 1821. But if the numbers of the corps suffered diminution on this occasion, its improved *morale* more than compensates for the reduction of its original force. The Caffres, sepoys, and Cingalese, who formerly made up its heterogeneous composition, have been gradually exchanged for the proud and stubborn Malays.

It has proved a matter of considerable difficulty to induce the Malays to confine their feet within shoes, or even to wear the sandals that are universally worn by the sepoys of the Company's army. Excepting a few individuals, who have compounded with their dignity or their prejudices, the

regiment still appear on all occasions barefooted. This certainly does not add either to their efficiency or appearance; but in all other respects they cannot fail to elicit general approbation.

That the island requires for the maintenance of its internal tranquillity such a large body of troops as that now stationed in it, is, to say the least, more than doubtful. The Kandian provinces include all the disaffected, whose numbers are even now very limited, and are rapidly diminishing. The populous districts on the sea-coast have no community of feeling with the inhabitants of the interior, and have ever evinced a desire to support rather than to resist the British Government. Ceylon is, however, an excellent point for concentrating a large military force, as, from its centric position, troops may, without difficulty, be despatched by sea to either the Malabar or Coromandel coast. It is, probably, on this account that so large an establishment has been kept up

in the island during a period of profound peace.*

Having thus hastily sketched the most prominent features of the society of Ceylon, it may be amusing to observe and trace the wide distinction that exists between the manners and customs of the Anglo-Cingalese and those of their fellow-countrymen in the peninsula of Hindostan. The insular position of Ceylon would, at first sight, seem to be the principal cause of this dissimilarity, but there are innumerable other and more important circumstances that operate to produce the striking contrast which is here alluded to.

In the first place, Ceylon, being a colony under the direct control of the British Government, is unconnected with the Anglo-Indian world by those ties, arising from a community of interests, that unite in a common bond of alliance, offensive and defensive,

* Since this was written, a considerable reduction has been effected.

all the civil and military servants of the East-India Company. The climate of Ceylon, so mild and equable when compared with that of India, has a considerable effect in banishing many articles of luxury that are by some considered as absolute necessaries of life within the tropics. The comparatively brief residence of both civilians and military in the island is another, and by no means the least, of the causes that tend to create a vast dissimilarity between the habits and ideas of the English in India and of those in Ceylon.

One of the consequences arising from the brief sojourn of our countrymen in Ceylon is, that they rarely take the trouble of learning the Cingalese language, or of acquiring even the few ordinary phrases that are most frequent in common parlance. Throughout a great part of India it is usual to address servants in Hindoostanee, and a knowledge of English is thus rendered, on their part, unnecessary, if not superfluous. But in Cey-

lon the primary qualification of an aspirant for the office of appoo* is, that he speak with fluency the language of "master." In the absence of this indispensable amount of learning, the possession of the graces and of the *tournure* of Adonis would avail him but little in the eyes of even the fair Anglo-Cingalese.

Whether "ignorance is bliss" in this instance, is a question concerning which some doubts may reasonably be entertained. But, although the ills arising from ignorance may, and probably do, preponderate, there is, at least, one beneficial effect resulting from the cause here mentioned. It is possible to converse or correspond with an Anglo-Cingalese without the aid of a Ceylonese Dictionary, as, whether orally or in writing, he usually expresses himself in his mother tongue. Now this the English in India rarely do. Their sentences, whether they reach you through the medium of the eye or of the

* Head servant.

ear, are somewhat unintelligible to one not deeply versed in the recondite mysteries of Oriental literature. It is true that, in process of time, the griffin, if gifted with superior conversational talents, gradually overcomes the difficulties which thus encounter him on his first *entrée* into the Indian world; but it is, nevertheless, a legitimate subject of inquiry, whether this *mélange* of tongues ought not to be "more honoured in the breach than the observance."

In India, the habits of the European societies are tinged with the delicacy of Oriental luxury. A multitude of servants supply every want, and almost anticipate every thought. But the pride of caste amongst the Hindoos, which absolutely compels the Anglo-Indian to maintain a great number of domestics to perform the most trival offices, is almost unknown to the less scrupulous Cingalese, of whom a less numerous establishment than is usual in India is found to answer every purpose. Palanquins and ton-

johns, which are universally used throughout Hindostan, are rarely, if ever, seen in Ceylon. In short, the English on the Asiatic continent seem to accommodate themselves to the climate of the country in which they are destined to reside, while those in Ceylon pertinaciously endeavour to resist the soft allurements of Eastern indolence, and to imitate, as far as may be practicable, the mode of living in England.

It may be questionable whether in this, as in the majority of cases, the adoption of a happy medium between English habits and Indian customs would not prove to be the most judicious plan of proceeding. But to enter into the comparative merits of the modes of living here contrasted, and fully to discuss this intricate subject in all its bearings and dependencies, is an undertaking to which I confess myself incompetent, and accordingly leave to the pens of more experienced Orientalists.

There is, however, one regulation in the

code of Eastern etiquette that appears so opposed to our laudable English prejudices as to demand the earnest reprobation of all good and true Englishmen. I allude to the practice which obtains throughout India, of requiring those who have recently arrived at a station to make the first advances towards forming the acquaintance of their neighbours, and thus to force themselves, as it were *vi et armis*, upon the society in their vicinity. For this singular custom, which so strongly militates against all the previously-formed ideas that new-comers from England are wont to entertain, no justification is ever attempted, and the querulous griffin is usually silenced, if not convinced, by the aphorism, "Do at Rome as Romans do." To the honour of the Anglo-Cingalese community be it said, that they have ever resisted the introduction of this law of fashion, which in India appears, like those of the Medes and Persians, to alter not.

Comparisons, however, at all times and

under all circumstances, are dangerous, and often, as Dogberry justly observes, "odorous." As, in the course of this volume, I have endeavoured to "nothing extenuate nor aught set down in malice," I am unwilling, in this concluding chapter, to incur the pains and penalties resulting from the neglect of that invaluable maxim. To flatter the Anglo-Cingalese at the expense of their continental brethren were indeed an unworthy, and, to me, an ungrateful task. A pleasing recollection of the kindness and hospitality that so eminently characterize our countrymen in India will ever be prominent amid my reminiscences of men and manners in the East.

On the 24th October, 1839, I sailed for England on board H. M. S. *Jupiter*, and, as the shades of evening gradually enveloped the fast-receding mountains of Ceylon, bade a long adieu to "the clime of the East" and "the land of the sun."

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

HEIGHTS OF SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL MOUNTAINS, &c. IN THE INTERIOR OF CEYLON.

(L, *by levelling*; Δ, *geodesical operations.*)

	Height above the sea, in feet.	Means.
Upper Lake in Kandy	1678	L
Maltan Pattanna, the hill above it ...	3192	Δ
Cornegalle, to the southward of Kandy	4380	Δ
Hoonnisagiria Peak	4990	Δ
The "Knuckles"	6180	Δ
Kaddoogunnawa Pass	1731	L
Adam's Peak	7420	Δ
Kammoonakoolé, near Badula ...	6740	Δ
Amboolluawa	3540	Δ
Pedrotallagalla	8280	Δ
Diatalawé	5030	Δ
Alloogallé	3440	Δ
Plains of Newera Ellia	6210	Δ
Plain of Welinanée	6990	Δ
Totapella	7720	Δ
Kirrigalpotta	7810	Δ

LATITUDES AND LONGITUDES.

	Latitude.	Longitude.	Authors.
Great Basses ...	6° 13′ 0″	81° 46′	Norie.
Little Basses ...	6° 24′ 30″	81° 55′	
Batticaloa... ...	7° 44′ 0″	81° 52′	
Bellegam Bay ...	5° 57′ 30″	80° 33′	Twynam.
Calametta Bay ...	6° 4′ 7″	81° 2′	
Colombo	6° 57′ 0″	80° 0′	
Dondra Head ...	5° 55′ 15″	80° 42′	
Galle	6° 1′ 0″	80° 20′	Twynam.
Gandore	5° 55′ 0″	80° 44′	
Hambantotte ...	6° 6′ 0″	81° 14′	
Kandy	7° 18′ 0″	80° 49′	
Point Pedro ...	9° 49′ 0″	80° 24′	Norie.
Trincomalee ...	8° 33′ 0′	81° 24′	

STATEMENT OF REVENUE FOR THE YEAR 1836.

	£.	s.	d.
Sea customs—duty on imports and exports, exclusive of cinnamon	66,418	1	8
Export duty on cinnamon	74,631	0	10
Sale of Government cinnamon	52,533	17	5¼
Land rents — paddy farms	32,481	9	10¾
Land rents — fine grain farms	2,733	19	9
Land rents — garden farms	466	1	1¾
Ferry, bridge, and canal tolls	5,906	2	1
Cart tolls	68	15	0
Licenses — arrack and toddy farms	32,296	3	11½
Licenses — duty on arrack stills	2,305	2	11
Licenses — duty on weights and measures ...	86	9	4½

Pearl fishery	£25,816	3	11½
Fish farms	7,412	7	5
Salt farms...	31,872	12	10½
Tax on houses	809	5	2½
Commutation tax	7	17	6
Tithes redeemed	2,317	1	3¾
Tobacco tithes	8	2	2½
Auction duties	231	4	0½
Portage ditto	2,607	9	7½
Blank stamps	2,806	15	11½
Judicial stamps	10,874	12	6½
Total fixed Revenue ...	£354,491	0	11½
Total incidental receipts...	41,629	0	4¾
" minor receipts	6,254	11	4¾
" arrears of revenue of former years ...	4,413	0	11½
	£406,787	13	8½

STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR 1836.

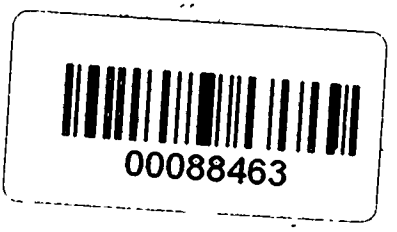
Arrears of expenditure	£23,328	7	3
Civil expenditure	229,916	16	7¾
Military expenditure	77,930	1	6¼
Expended by the agent in England during the year 1836	21,781	12	9
Total Expenditure	£352,986	18	2½

RETURN OF THE REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE OF EACH YEAR, FROM 1821 TO 1836, INCLUSIVE, SHEWING THE EXCESS OF REVENUE OR OF EXPENDITURE IN EACH YEAR.

	Revenue.	Expenditure.	Excess of Revenue.	Excess of Expenditure.
	£.	£.	£.	£.
1821...	459,699	481,854	—	22,155
1822...	473,669	458,346	15,323	—
1823...	355,406	476,242	—	120,836
1824...	387,259	441,592	—	54,333
1825...	355,320	495,529	—	140,209
1826...	278,350	394,229	—	115,879
1827...	264,735	411,648	—	146,913
1828...	305,712	339,516	—	33,804
1829...	389,534	344,757	44,777	—
1830...	403,475	347,029	56,446	—
1831...	420,170	346,565	73,605	—
1832...	369,437	338,100	31,337	—
1833...	437,555	331,764	105,791	—
1834...	377,952	334,835	43,117	—
1835...	371,995	323,277	48,718	—
1836...	406,787	352,986	53,801	—
	6,057,055	6,218,269	472,915	634,129
	Deduct excess of Revenue ...			472,915
	Net excess of Expenditure ...			£161,214

THE END.

Printed by J. L. Cox and Sons, 75, Great Queen Street, Lincoln's-Inn Fields.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